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SOME PASSAGES IN THE LIFE OF A BIBLE-READER.

CHAPTER VII.

ALL the world knows that charity ought to begin at home; and, as my spiritual seed had hitherto been sown only in desert places, I thought it but right to see how far my immediate relations were disposed to receive the 'crumbs of comfort,' and the fructifying grains of eternal life.

My mother, of course, was an object of great solicitude; nor were the claims of my brothers and sisters to an act of regeneration entirely overlooked. From these I anticipated little or no opposition to my holy designs; but the habitual obstinacy of my father's character gave me but little hope in that quarter. Being a 'child of faith,' however, and 'specially called' to announce to deluded men the glad tidings of salvation, I went forward with a hurried step, resolving to discharge my evangelical duty, and leave the rest to God; who, I sincerely believed, attended on my footsteps.

It was noon when I came within sight of my father's humble shed. The blue smoke, as it curled in thick volumes above the tops of the few poplars which shaded the *bawn*, announced to me that the frugal fare on which the Irish peasantry are accustomed to dine was in a state of preparation. At another time the near approach to an habitation where those who loved and were beloved resided, in all the simplicity of the world's ignorance, strangers to its wiles, and contented with their obscurity, would have awakened feelings honourable to our nature. The recollections of past associations—the remembrance of innocent days, and innocent pastimes—must have rushed upon my mind; while the anticipation of parental benediction and fraternal gladness, would have caused a delightful tremor followed by unbidden tears—sweet in their bitterness. But, alas! I laboured under a fanatical fever
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which discoloured every thing I looked upon, and forced me onward, into a labyrinth of delusion, with irresistible impetuosity. My zeal was extreme; and, strange as it may appear, though filled with pride, much of my extravagance arose directly from an excess of fervid humanity. I would not 'needlessly set foot upon a worm;' how then could I remain inactive, believing, as I did, that millions around me were hurrying headlong into the bottomless pit, where horrors endure for ever? Were this inevitable, I might have congratulated myself on my good fortune in being one of the 'elect;' and, perhaps, shed a tear over the destiny of those who knew not 'grace;' but as it were still possible to save them from the wolves of perdition—to bring them within the chosen fold—I should be less than man had I stood by and only prayed for their conversion: it was an impulse of humanity, operated on by religious zeal, that prompted me to arrest the career of iniquity—to disappoint 'the gentleman in sables' of his destined prey.

As I entered my father's door, my mother was in the act of bisecting, as mathematicians would say, a sturdy furze stick, the better to fit it, as fuel under the potatoe pot; and, as the bill-hook was none of the sharpest, she looked a little flurried. I stood motionless and silent before her: she gazed at me for an instant with somewhat of astonishment; let the edge, or rather edgeless, tool fall out of her hand, after the manner of Corporal Trim's hat; exclaiming, at the same time, 'Tear an blud-an-ounze, Jesper, jewel, is this you!'

'Woman!' I replied, 'swear not at all!'

'Christ save us,' she rejoined, clasping her hands, 'why, you are mad; we always thought the larnin had cracked you, but ulla-loo! I see now you've lost your nathural senses

entirely. Ugh, mushal mushal the neighbours all along sed this would be the case; but, fool as I was, I wudn't believe 'em.'

'I am not mad, O Festus—'

'You'll *infest* us. Gracious! have you got the plague too?'

'Yes,' I replied, 'I come to inoculate you all with the grace of Jesus. When the sign is in the high places, flee to the mountains; the anti-christ is on the earth—he is at Rome; and thou, O mother, art lost unless you repent—unless you read your Bible.'

'Read my Bible arake! faith an you know, Jesper, that's what I can't do, hein never larn'd my letthers, an may be it might be as well for you if you wure so too; for I fear very much that you're not goin the right road.—Read my Bible! an so I'm to be lost if I don't read my Bible! God help us, then, if that is the case; but I blieve you're no prophet.'

I was about to reply, when my father and brother entered. They looked at me with surprise: the eye of the one indicated satisfaction—the look of the other told me I had lost a parent's affection. 'Who are you?' he demanded in a haughty tone of honest firmness. 'Your dutiful son,' I replied. 'Dutiful!' he retorted sarcastically; 'was it dutiful to turn Protestant, an make your fadher hide his head in fair an market? Was it dutiful to turn swaddlin preacher in Dublin? An pray, Mister Dutiful, what brought you here?'

'To preach Christ crucified!'

'Christ fiddlestick! God forgive me for sayin it. What do you know about Christ or any thing else, you *pusthughaan* of a brat? Isn't it a burnin shame for you that I can't go to a birn or a pattern, but 'tis "there's the man whose son turned Protestant!"'

'Heed not, father,' said I, 'the words of the profane, but stick to the word of eternal life.'

'An pray, Jesper, what might that be in your meanin?'

'The Bible,' I answered, putting one into his hand. He carelessly turned over the leaves; and then, raising his head, he said, 'Well, but this is only a buke.'

'It is the inspired word of God.'

'Who tould you so?'

'The whole Christian world.'

'Did you hear it all?'

'It is a notorious fact; besides, the Bible has been received as true for the last eighteen hundred years.'

'How do you know that?'

'From the testimony of the holy fathers; and succeeding Christian authors.'

'That is,' retorted my father, 'you bring in the word of man to show that this is the word of God! You prove the Divine by the profane.'

This was a puzzler; but I replied, 'Oh! there is also an internal evidence.'

'Indeed!' said he, opening the book; 'why I can see nothing extraordinary here—it is paper an print.'

'Certainly; but read it.'

He did so; it was 'Solomon's Song.' 'It is the voice of my beloved that mocketh, saying, "Open to me my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew; and my locks with the drops of night." Why,' he continued, 'there is nothin extraordinary there: it is like the ould song—'

"Open the dure, purty Pully, 'tis a could winter's night."

'Hold,' I cried, 'make no profane comparisons; the passage you have just read is a description of Christ.'

'I beg a thousand pardons; you see how dangerous it is for a poor man to presume to decide upon what you call "internal evidence;" and what you say may be true; but I'll ax the priest to-morrow or next day.'

'Why not judge for yourself?'

'Judge for myself! why I have, an you tell me I've judged erroneously. You may be right an I may be wrong; therefore, I must apply for advice elsewhere.'

'Ay; but why not confide in me? I have studied the Scriptures.'

'No doubt, Jesper; but, do you see, you're a very young man, an you've turned to a very young religion; while there's father John, God bless 'im! is a very ould man, an belongs to a very ould religion; an besides has always proved my friend when I was poor an when I was prosperous, in

wet an in cold—when 'twas warm an when 'twas dry. I'm sure he's an honest man, an has my good at heart; an, what's more, he must have more

larnin nor you, an is much longer in the world. 'Tis but right, therefore, that I should ax 'im all about this buke.'

CHAPTER VIII.

I have been particular in giving this little dialogue accurately; my interlocutor was an unlettered man—he was ignorant of book-learning; but had what reading cannot compensate for the want of—a fund of natural or common sense. I am no enemy to education—I place a proper value on the benefits which literature is calculated to produce; but, in spite of the cant of the day, I must say that the *pretensions* of the learned, as some lettered fools call themselves, have done an infinite deal of mischief; they have succeeded, but too well, in producing an universal opinion favourable to their own craft, and disadvantageous to all knowledge but that derived from stupid folios. Mankind seem to be quite unaware of the detrimental nature of these pretensions: they do not know how injurious they are to individual dignity; to natural independence; and even to human happiness. The learned, like the aristocracy, cause a prostration of intellect; and having so long assumed a superiority, the world has erroneously come to a tacit agreement that literature, or book-learning, elevates man above his species. A fine subject for declamation; and therefore not at all wonderful, that those who never can be learned, subscribe willingly to a doctrine which degrades themselves in the scale of moral being. With more than Christian humility, when carried to excess, they needlessly depress themselves to the condition of brutes.

I never yet attended—and I have attended many—a meeting of mechanics, shop-keepers, or farmers, without witnessing this humiliation of my species. Each speaker uniformly commenced or concluded by lamenting his want of learning, stating that he had the misfortune never to have been at college; and consequently it could not be expected that he could deliver himself with propriety. Miserable cant! Greek and Latin—and what else is taught in colleges?—can neither make a man eloquent or

learned; they give him certain pretensions, and nothing more. Amongst the herd of the scholars how few men of knowledge—either theoretically or practically?

The poor man should be taught that whoever has got the use of speech can speak—whether for minutes or hours successively depends entirely upon practice; and that whoever has got the thinking faculties, can, by exercising these faculties, without any application to books, become wise. Knowledge is merely the result of experience; and he who is employed in the every-day business of life, must imperceptibly acquire a fund of information. He possesses this often without knowing it; and if he is not scared by the ideal and adscititious glitter of literature, he is full a match, on all points that immediately concern himself, with the drones of all the colleges in Europe; nay, he is really a much wiser man than any of them.

The first great lesson, therefore, to be taught the people, is, that men study only to ascertain, 'how little can be known;' and that common sense is the best sense—and best philosophy too. Cover the face of the country with schools and institutions, and the nine-tenths of mankind must continue ignorant of most of the abstract sciences. The laws of nature, which make man live in the sweat of his brow, have rendered it impossible to obviate this state of ignorance: philanthropists and legislators can do absolutely nothing; nor is it to be lamented that they cannot. Astronomy, though very useful to the mariner, would be quite useless to a ploughman; and geometry, though necessary to the engineer, would be by no means necessary to the butcher. Each profession will acquire that knowledge which is essentially necessary to its peculiar pursuits; and neglect all other sciences. But common sense being a commodity in universal request, it is fortunately of easy access—every man acquires a certain portion of it; and this knowledge,

which costs him neither time nor trouble, produces in his mind the same results which flow from book-learning. Education, in the ordinary sense of the word, is therefore frequently over-rated. I do not mean to deny its utility; but most commonly that is attributed to the schoolmaster which is owing entirely to circumstances. It should never be forgotten that books themselves are an effect, and not a cause.

The truth of these remarks is easily ascertained: let whoever doubts, interrogate the unlettered man of the world on the most abstruse points in religion, morals, or politics, and he will find the conclusions of the learned anticipated by a very summary, but very natural, process of vulgar reasoning. Indeed, the researches of the scholar seem only to confirm the decisions which common sense had come to long before; and whenever the inquirer has departed from the beacon of vulgar knowledge, he has uniformly plunged into error.

The dialogue with my father furnishes a remarkable illustration of the power of common sense, when directed to the consideration of an abstruse question. He had in all probability never given the subject a moment's consideration; yet it was no sooner presented to his mind, than he not only came to the same conclusion, but defended it by arguments similar to those made use of by the ablest advocates of the Catholic church; who contend that there is, and ought to be, a living, speaking, tribunal, authorised and qualified to decide on questions of controversy and the import of holy writ. To this decision my father came; but in a way so simple, and so natural, that I knew no arguments calculated to divert a rational man from pursuing the path he had marked out for himself with the design of arriving at truth. He saw his advantage; but, instead of persisting in the discussion, he started another topic of conversation.

I slept there that night, and early next morning I arose to read my Bible. The first passage that met my eyes, was that in which Christ commands his Apostles to go through all nations, preaching and baptizing. If I had ever doubted of my 'call' it was

not at this moment—my pious frenzy was revived. I quitted the paternal roof abruptly, and hastened to the high road. The most prominent object in view was the chimneys of Mount-M—; and recollecting that there were some stray sheep there, I instantly resolved on bringing them into the fold of Christ. On approaching the house, I saw a lady and gentleman coming towards me by the gravel walk which wended through the lawn; they were the children of my former patron—Master M—, and his lovely sister, Caroline. As they drew near, I put myself—for the fit was on me—in an attitude of exhortation: they stared and slackened their pace; I quickened mine, and on coming closer, I inquired if they knew God. The singularity of the question caused them to stop short; and my juvenile companions having regarded me attentively for a few minutes, exclaimed, 'As I live it is Jasper D—!' 'Jasper D—!' cried Caroline, 'impossible, brother; for this man is a swaddling preacher.'

'Thou art right, and thou art wrong, young woman,' said I; 'I am that saved sinner, Jasper D—, and am a preacher of the word; I am come to call you to repentance.'

She burst into a loud laugh; her brother followed her example; and both began, rather too curiously as I thought, to inspect my garments with the sanctified cut. 'Avaunt thou evil ones,' I cried, 'mock not a servant of the Lord; lest, like the profane scoffers, the lion, at the voice of the prophet, come forth from the woods and devour you.'

This rebuke only increased their merriment: 'He is mad,' said Henry. 'Oh, no,' said Caroline, in a rather piteous tone, 'he is only jesting.' 'Jesting!' I cried; 'thou wanton, how dar'st thou—'

'Hold, sir,' interrupted her brother, 'this is carrying the jest too far. If you have taken to the canting trade, pursue your vocation elsewhere; we want no new lights here. There, sir, is the gate which leads to the high road.' And he drew his sister's arm within his, turned on his heel, and left me. I was abashed; but pulling out my Bible, I read a few words—I knew not where—but fancied they

were words of comfort; then took the path pointed out to me, and, on passing through the gate, with holy indignation shook the dust from off my shoes. This was following my Bible too literally.

On gaining the high road I was accosted by two persons on horse-back. Their conversation soon convinced me that I was not wrong in inferring from their dress that they were preachers of the 'word.' They rejoiced on finding one after their own heart in a land of sinners; and forthwith invited me

to accompany them. I did so, but our efforts were unavailing: we preached incessantly, but made no proselytes; and at length came to the unwilling conclusion that God had fore-doomed Catholic Ireland to eternal perdition—to live without any communion with the 'spirit.' This naturally gave us great consolation: it was an apology for our want of success; and as England was ripe for the sickle of the Lord, we embarked for that land of 'Saints' and Bibles.

CHAPTER. IX.

England is the country of religious liberty. Bigotry is as brief and as mischievous there as in other places; but, from the nature of the constitution, and the inherent peculiarities of Protestantism, it is easily avoided; though you are a determined enemy of the Established Church. You may preach any doctrine—or, what is more common, any nonsense—with impunity, provided you do three things:—hate Popery, abhor Tom Paine, and pretend to read and admire the Bible. The last, though indispensable, is not sufficient without the two former.

A fanatic such as I was then—and who, to an unbounded veneration for his Bible, added a delightful hatred of Popery and infidelity, about both of which I knew little or nothing—could not fail to be delighted with the people of England. Having quarrelled with my sable friends at Bristol, on a point of doctrine, I commenced preaching on my own account. In the fields and on the highways my first essays were made; and as I happened to take the counties of Dorset, Devon, and Cornwall, in my way, I had a rather attentive and orderly audience, except when I ventured into the towns. Then, indeed, I occasionally encountered some sturdy vagabonds; who, like Alexander the copper-smith, wrought me much evil—the Lord reward them according to their works! In general, however, I was allowed to hold forth unmolested; for, to much simplicity of manners, the people in these parts added an extreme ignorance. Education was, and is, almost unknown among them; while they were surrounded with quite as much poverty, filth, and

misery, as ever I witnessed in the worst times in the worst districts in Ireland.

The success which attended my first efforts—the attention paid me by sober people among all classes, particularly the female part—and, above all, the numbers who soon made it their business to attend my sermons, whether delivered in fields or barns—on the road-side or at the market-cross—inspired me with such a respect for myself, that I had no doubt of the finger of God being visible in the business. That I was specially called, there could be no doubt—that I was actually inspired, I was myself thoroughly convinced.

All this time I was actually devoid of religion—that is, I belonged to no existing body of professing Christians—I had no creed, properly so called, but preached a crude kind of Christianity—a religion concocted by myself—a faith undefined by articles, and gloriously independent of consistency or a liturgy. My success was in part owing to all this. I had zeal, enthusiasm; and following on all occasions the bent of the moment, and endowed with a reasonable share of rude eloquence, I led captive the understandings of my credulous auditors; who, being taught to look for their religion in the Bible, naturally listened without suspicion to one who pretended to derive all his knowledge—all his morality—all his precepts—from the Divine volume.

When, at the instance of a titled 'saint,' I removed to London, where I soon became master of a tabernacle, I continued independent of the shackles of religion. My 'house of

prayer' was called a dissenting chapel, but no one could tell what sect the preacher belonged to. From this I suffered no inconvenience whatever; no one ever inquired into my creed, and I became popular without any extraordinary display on my part. A few fashionables cried me up as a novelty; a few great men honoured my chapel with their presence; and in a short time my preaching became a subject of conversation. Those who went to church in the morning, came to hear me in the evening; my name got into the newspapers; and the critics differed respecting my abilities. This was enough—fortune followed. Three ancient ladies successively made me their heir; and at length a public character—and, what is still more extraordinary, a mathematician—died, having first bequeathed me some hundreds of thousands. These riches were not, I am confident, acquired dishonourably; I was no hypocrite—I was only a fanatic.

Among the number of acquaintances which my piety, or rather my wealth, attracted to my house, was the Rev. Mr. R——. He was a Baptist minister; sleek, prim, and insinuating. He affected to have a great friendship for me, and under one pretence or other contrived to spend one or two evenings in every week in my parlour. On one occasion he went deeper than usual in the bottle, was very facetious, and told some odd stories respecting religious people. I marvelled, and

he went on with his illustrations; such a divine was a debauchee, and such a one was worse! Hardly any one was free from blemish; and yet my guest only laughed at what filled me with amazement and horror. At twelve o'clock the decanter was replenished; he called on me to fill, and when I had complied, he raised his glass, saying, 'Success to trade.' 'What trade?' I inquired. 'The canting trade, to be sure,' was his reply.

I had been somewhat less abstemious this evening than usual, but still I was not so far gone as to be incapable of acting with propriety. I called on my guest for an explanation, and appeared offended. 'You were born for the stage,' he stammered out, with a hiccup between every word, 'pon my soul you was—you are such'—(hiccup)—'a capital actor'—(hiccup).

'Actor!' said I; 'what do you mean?'

Here he gave another laugh and another hiccup—after which he contrived to inform me that I was a hypocrite and himself another—that most of our reverend brethren were nothing better—and that it was absolutely necessary to humbug the public by preaching doctrines no sensible man could believe. Having expressed my abhorrence of his principles, and repelled the insinuation respecting my own sincerity, I left the room.

CHAPTER X.

Next morning my misery commenced. The conduct of the reverend bacchanalian filled me with surprise; and events accelerated the mighty change which was about to take place in my sentiments. As one of the pious lions of the day, I had been invited to act the orator for the amusement of the ladies, and the benefit of a charitable society, at a meeting to be held at the City of London Tavern. There was a double preparation necessary—one concerning the outward man, and the other touching speechification; and, what with dressing and thinking, the hour of attendance had arrived, without my having had time to determine how I ought to act towards the Baptist

preacher, should he again renew his visits.

The great room of the tavern, on my arrival, was filled to overflowing. Youth and beauty were peered on each side, advantageously arranged by the getters-up of the pious drama to attract observation—to induce them to come to such exhibitions again—and, in fine, to flatter the vanity and designs of the weaker vessel to assist in the works of charity—*alias* pious frauds. Men and women are but kings, queens, castles, knights, bishops, and pawns, with which knaves play their games on that great chess-board—the world. They are moved at ease; and, though flattering themselves that they are performing a

busy and important part, they are but mere instruments of gain and conquest in the hands of potent players. Religious men and statesmen play this game with most skill and adroitness—frequently against each other, but oftener into each other's hands. I have latterly felt myself humiliated in the humiliation of my species, when attending at Bible meetings. I cannot help observing the different arts of the different players. One reverend gamester wins by relying on the *queen*; another, by guarding the *king* with his *bishops*. Some, averse to episcopacy, make mere decoys of the

mitre-topped gentlemen, rely on the strength of their *castles*, or more commonly trust themselves to the rabble of pawns. Individuals of this last class, however, are sacrificed without a murmur, when an advantage is to be gained thereby. All are intent on gain; and, unlike most other games of chance, all here are winners—check-mate uniformly terminates the sport. Was not Franklin right when he talked of the philosophy of chess?

I do not deny but that I was once one of these gamblers in disguise—but I was young—I was sincere.

CHAPTER XI.

On the present occasion, the whippers-in no sooner caught a glimpse of my (through affectation) disastrous countenance, than they joyfully announced my presence. Then commenced the shouts of gladness: the gentlemen stood up, the old ladies relaxed their methodistical fronts into a smile, and the young ones waved their snowy handkerchiefs, and looked unutterable things. I was not wood or stone—the cheers thrilled through my whole frame; but I suppressed my satisfaction; I bent my head with apparent humility; and a way having been instantly made for me, I passed to my seat on the platform appropriated to the actors, *alias* the orators.

Every thing we look upon forces us to think; and when I cast my eyes upon the people assembled, and back upon the reverend brethren who immediately surrounded me, I could not help, like the eastern monarch, reflecting that all these would be no more in a few years. Think constantly on the day of judgment, is the injunction of all Christian teachers; because you cannot think of this final adjustment without being reminded of Hell and Heaven. The association is natural, and it arose spontaneously in my mind. Were all, or what portion of those present, destined to eternal torments? The mental interrogation gave me unusual pain. I had never contemplated the subject in the same way before; and now how could I think—imagine—that the lovely beings who composed the ma-

jority of the assembly, and who were so like what we fancy angels to be, could be consigned to burnings that admitted of no relief? I was filled with horror at the bare supposition, and was happily aroused from my reverie by the entrance of my Baptist friend. The announcement of his name was received with acclamations, and he appeared to be a special favourite with the ladies. He had something to whisper into the ear of every old woman he came near, made their dimple-checked daughters smile by funny allusions, and indiscriminately shook hands with every one he passed. He was, doubtlessly, considered a very nice man; and appeared equally as popular among those on the platform as among the laical portion of the meeting. He nodded at one parson—winked at another; and, as I had special cause for observing him, the signification of all this seemed to amount to a positive proof of the truth of his allegation on the preceding evening.

When the business began he stood forward as the mover of the first resolution. He acted his part well; I had some misgivings of the conclusion I had come to, but when he had concluded the nods and winks were renewed; and, for the first time, I was taught to consider a man before the public, and a man abstracted from the popular gaze, two different beings. The speakers admitted their dissimilarity of creeds, boasted that each of their religions was founded on the Bible, and said several smart things

against Popery, because Catholics went further—believing in the word of God, but denying that the Scriptures contain the whole of that word.

I marvelled at all this; and, as I felt uncomfortable, quitted the meeting before the business had been concluded. On my way home I stopped at a book stall: the bibliopole had written on one of his volumes, 'Adams's View of all Religions.' I regarded this as ominous—purchased the book for a shilling—would have given five pounds, and hastened home to read it.

I opened the volume eagerly. The first article I read was on Calvinism, and by the time it was concluded I was a Calvinist; wondered I had not embraced the doctrine sooner, seeing that it had *Scripture* for its foundation. 'Calvin,' thought I, 'was certainly right—I'll visit Geneva;' then turned to the article 'Lutherans,' and became as quickly a Lutheran. 'There was Scripture for it.' Methodism came in next for a perusal, and here was 'Scripture' again. Whitfield drew his religion from the Bible, and so did Wesley; were they both right? I did not stop to decide; I had got into a mysterious labyrinth; and by a new clue I came to 'Quakerism.' Here was Barclay and Scripture: the Bible was here also the foundation; and the tenets of George Fox's creed seemed bottomed on holy writ. I had first become a Calvinist, next a Lutheran, then a Methodist, and lastly a Quaker. Why not? They had all equal claims—they were founded on the written word. Excess of light seemed to have blinded me; I knew not now the *right* road. My happy ignorance had been obtruded upon: I felt, I knew not why, unhappy.

A reverend friend entered—he was an Unitarian Christian. The subject uppermost in my mind became the theme of our conversation; he told me Jesus Christ was a mere man: I believed him. I read the article on Unitarianism on going to bed, and resolved to announce my change of religion to my flock on the following Sunday. Next morning, however, the book lay on the toilet invitingly open; like the devil in German stories, it offered consolation

only to plunge me still deeper in misery. I stretched out my hand for it, raised my head by the help of two pillows, and commenced reading the introduction, which treats of the state of the religious world at the time of Christ's appearance on earth. The second section produced an electrical effect—it persuaded me, or rather I persuaded myself, that the Redeemer taught nothing new; every one of his doctrines appeared, from this account, to have been anticipated. He was, I daringly thought, merely one of the Essenes; their morality and system of religion seemed closely to resemble his; and, what astonished me still more, the doctrine of a Trinity was taught long before by the oriental philosophers.

I was plunged into a sea of troubles; I knew not what to think—I knew not who to apply to. I opened my Bible. Alas! its consoling power had vanished—the devotional hue which was wont to pervade its pages had disappeared; while in many instances it only served to add fuel to the infidel flame which burned within me. Like others, I had attributed to the Bible those healing qualities which arose out of the state of my own feelings; for the Bible—if the truth be told—is not a potent Catholican. If it contains promises, it also contains threats: something else is absolutely necessary; those who deny this with their lips, confess it in their practices.

To a mind into which doubt has once entered, the Bible is the most dangerous of all books. The thing is demonstrated in the fact, that nearly all well-educated Protestants are, more or less, of free-thinking dispositions. Those passages, which formerly appeared to me proofs of its Divine inspiration, now assumed a different character; and the whole, occasionally, appeared in my eyes a gross piece of imposition. I say occasionally, for I could not entirely divest myself of the opinions I had held. I doubted of all I read—*pro* and *con*. Voltaire, and Gibbon, and Bolingbroke, and Paine, were perused, but without convincing me that Christianity was a cheat; and on the other hand I read Paley, and Watson, and a hundred others, without being con-

vinced that Christianity was worthy of belief.

Previous to this, I had disposed of my chapel; I was no hypocrite, and removed into the country. I was wealthy, and nothing was wanting to make me happy but a contented mind. This, however, was unattainable: I read the Bible only to draw inferences unfavourable to its claims; I read philosophers only to perplex me the more; I was the most miserable of men; I dreaded the future; I feared to die; I knew not whether I had a soul or not; I almost doubted that I existed; and, once or twice, contemplated suicide, as a means of escaping the mental torture to which I was subjected.

Infidels, or, more properly speaking, deists, tell you that they are happy—that they are not afraid to die. They deceive you—the thing is totally impossible. The future is a dark expanse, into which we must all penetrate; there is no avoiding it. How then can any one say he is indifferent about it? That he is ignorant of its mazes and ending is the very reason why he is inevitably compelled to think upon it. This was my case; philosophy afforded no clue to this labyrinth—no map of this undiscovered country. Did it or did it not exist? Philosophy was silent. Religion proclaimed that there was another and a better world. All men believe that there is; and can they be deceived? Impossible, I thought; but then I wished to have proofs of this, too convincing to be doubted—I wished to converse with the dead. To such lengths will a terrible dissatisfaction lead the infidel! The dead, however, answered not my call; though many were the sleepless nights spent in foolish, and, I fear, unholy, incantations. Any religion is better than infidelity; he who believes in an error is happier than he who doubts of a truth.

To this conclusion I come after seven years of doubt—seven years of the most excruciating mental anguish.

It afforded a clue by which I could escape from the hourly tortures which beset me, by leading my inquiries to the nature of the human mind. Man had a beginning—that is an unquestionable fact; but, as knowledge is solely the result of experience, men were through necessity originally ignorant. Being placed, however, in the midst of miracles, he must have worshipped something; that is, religion must have been coeval with man. Now, ignorance is liable to be imposed upon; and, unless the Almighty made a covenant with man—unless he taught him a beneficial religion—he could not blame him for practising an erroneous one. More than this, an erroneous one is invariably productive of mischief; it interferes with human happiness; consequently, if God desired the happiness of his creatures—and that he did all nature proclaims—he would have given him a religion calculated to promote this happiness. If he then followed an erroneous one, man was himself responsible for his own folly.

Thus we can demonstrate that there must have been a religion from the first, dictated by God himself. What religion is that? The religion which conduces most to human happiness. Christianity undoubtedly does so; ergo, Christianity is the religion founded by the Almighty.

It took me some time to come to this conclusion; I was happy when I had arrived at it. But again doubt obtruded; which religion of the eight hundred, into which Christians are divided, is the best? I have not as yet been able to answer this question. I am now debating the question in my own mind: when I come to a conclusion, perhaps I may communicate it to the public.

One thing, however, must be obvious from the foregoing—namely, that Bible reading—without other reading or teaching—leaves the mind unstable, insecure, and ultimately either fanatical or unhappy.

THE OSCOTIAN.

WE have been much entertained by the perusal of a small periodical, entitled 'The Oscotian, or Monthly Literary Gazette of St. Mary's.' It professes to be the production of the *alumni* of the Roman Catholic College, situated at Oscott, in the neighbourhood of Birmingham, which, our readers will remember, was organized under the favourable auspices of the late venerable Dr. MILNER. This establishment has been always signalized by its attention to the Belles Lettres, and polite literature in general; the prize compositions which it has given to the world have frequently been superior to the general run of such articles: as an exemplification of this, we might particularly specify the highly poetical lines of Mr. Mackey on the wrongs of Ireland,—and, in more instances than one, have we had the pleasure of the acquaintance of polished scholars, and accomplished gentlemen in every sense of the terms, who have been proud to call Oscott their Alma Mater. We have thought it proper thus to introduce this establishment to the knowledge of our readers, as it is one of the effects of the odious system of exclusion, under which the Catholics of these kingdoms labour, studiously to throw a veil over their very respectable places of education, and to remove from the public eye the proficiency which they are daily making in scholastic improvement, although not unfrequently fully capacitated to compete with any thing which the exclusionists themselves can show as the product of their more favoured Protestant foundations, and *acquisitions*.

The little journal before us seems to be formed something on the plan of 'The Etonian;' with this difference, however, that the juvenile literati of St. Mary's have gone a step,—and that too a considerable one,—beyond the students of 'Mater Etona;' for besides writing, arranging, and editing their magazine, the former, it seems, have procured a press, and themselves execute the typographical department. This really manifests no small degree of the zeal of literature, and, to say sooth, *concedendis concessis*, the thing is very respecta-

bly got up; and we have seen many worse specimens of printing issue from the office of a professional man. But it is not so much for the *manual*, as the *mental*, composition that 'The Oscotian' claims praise, or in which our readers will feel interested.

There is always so much of pleasurable feeling in watching the gradual development of the human mind, and marking the young bud-dings of genius unfold themselves, like the chalice of the spring flower to the morning sun, that we always hail with peculiar gratification the appearance of works of this nature, and have recourse to them as a pleasing relaxation of the more serious studies of manhood; the pages seem to breathe a fragrance all their own, redolent, as they are, of youth and joy, and sensations, and times gone by, to which the memory turns with fond regret; and in tracing the cheery scenes of which we ourselves were once the busy actors, and listening to sentiments of which we were once the full participators, we almost learn to forget the wrinkles, and the white-ning head of years; we throw aside the spectacles, and, so strong is the delusion, well nigh imagine ourselves bustling once more among the laughing amusements of our boyhood, and 'strutting our little hour upon the stage' of a collegiate establishment. Independent, however, of these sentiments, the periodical before us has attractions, considered as a literary curiosity; and, as it is only published for private circulation, we feel convinced that our readers will thank us for entering more into a detail of its merits, and presenting them with rather copious extracts.

We shall begin with the prose. As must naturally be expected, and as indeed is almost universally the case with juvenile authors, the style of the prose articles is too much inflated; an exuberance of figurative language is observable, and, in many instances, a little more of the 'labor limæ' would have been eminently useful.

— 'erat quod tollere velles.'

This, however, may be called a commendable fault; it is the unbroken, and untrained extravagancies of ge-

nus; if it call for retrenchment, it shows that there is something to cut from, and will be gradually reduced by the sobriety of years. From the tone of many of the communications, we are inclined to believe that a considerable portion of our youthful authors are Irish; the spirit of patriotism which they breathe is equivalent to a signature, and the rich legendary lore of the 'Emerald Isle' is happily moulded into story.

In every collegiate establishment there is an awful personage, yclept the house-keeper, upon whose smiles or frowns the weal or woe of the young denizens mainly depends. We remember full well this petticoated governor of our boyhood; even now she passes before our 'mind's eye' with all the nitid order of her snowy mob-cap, and daintily smoothed apron; primmed up with all the self-sufficiency of command, she 'looked unutterable things;' and we cannot, even at this advance in the march of life, revert, without a hearty laugh, to the thousand and one tricks which our boyish roguishness invented to strike the balance for an ill-natured information, or the emulous avidity with which, in the case of 'short commons,' we meritoriously laboured to reduce the college larder to a *ne plus ultra*. An economical dame in this high office seems to have governed the destinies of the *alumni* of St. Mary's, and to have received in compensation due for her thriftiness the subjoined humorous *jeu d'esprit*.

MRS. THRIFTY—A COMEDY.

SCENE I.—*A back kitchen, discovers Mrs. Thrifty kneading dough.*

Mrs. Thrifty, *sola*—Yes! 19d. ay and 20d. *per pound* butter!—Bless me! what will things come to? And these *byes* eating butter! twice a-day! 'Stravagance, right down 'stravagance. I've no notion of children being so much indulged; I am sure if they were my children, they should not taste a bit of butter, from one week's end to another, 'specially when it is so dear—eat butter at 20d. a pound! just as if dry bread wasn't good enough.

Enter Mary.

Mrs. Thrifty—Well, Mary! I was just going to call you. Is the copper ready for these puddings? I've made a dozen; but don't think they be *enow*; these *byes* eat so 'normously. Would you believe it? they devoured forty pounds of meat yesterday! But it won't do to buy prime pieces at this rate, they shall have no more rump *jints*, I promises 'em: it is the most unprofitablest part we can buy. But what are those things they've got; *fit-bells, fat-bells*, or what is it?

Mary—Foot-balls, ma'am!

Mrs. Thrifty—Ay, that's it. And the imperant little *varlets* think I shall make them nice, thin, *dilikit* *pastry*. No! nothing like something 'stantial for school *byes*. But, Mary, this sugar's three parts sand, I told you to bring that that's only half mixed. I am making a tart for this *kimpany*, child. Now, Mary, you may put the puddins into the pot. (*Exit Mary.*)

SCENE II.—*A loud laugh from without. Enter John the footman.*

Mrs. Thrifty—Why, what's come to them now, John?

John—I think as how they'n *summut* as pleasens 'em. *Summut* as they calls a Repository,* or some such name as that.

Mrs. Thrifty—A Pository, John! pray what's a Pository?

John—Why I can't tell justly, ma'am; but I heard 'em say as how they'd put you into it, and your pound of butter, the other morning.

Mrs. Thrifty—Put me into the Pository indeed! they must look two ways first! I should be a fine house-keeper over half a dozen servants, to let these *byes* put me in the Pository! Mrs. Thrifty, I warrant her, knows how to take care of her *P's* and *Q's* better than that. *Howsomever*, I should like to see this Pository, if it was only to find the butter, and the four candle ends, I lost in the *Ref'try* the other night. *Spoze us goes and 'samins* when they're gone to supper, John?

John—Very well, ma'am. (*Exit John.*)

* 'The Repository' is a collection of humorous and satirical pieces, composed and read out publicly about every week, in which Mrs. Thrifty is supposed to be 'put in,' i. e. to be ridiculed.

Mrs. Thrifty alone—And the imperant little varlets puts all these things into the *Pository*! Ay, and now I think of it,—I lost a skein of thread and a new thimble yesterday; but (*walking with an air of importance*) I'm too deep for 'em yet!

Enter Farmer Dobbins.

Mrs. Thrifty—Good morning, Mr. Dobbins! how do you do?

Dobbins—Why, pretty heartyish, thank you, ma'am. (*Scratchiny his head*) I was going to ask a little elder wine of you, for my wife's cold dunna get about cleverish yet.

Mrs. Thrifty—I am very sorry, Mr. Dobbins, you want a little elder wine. Hem! elder wine's very 'sensitive now a day. Don't you think a little rhubarb or julap would do as well?

Dobbins—Why, ma'am, her's 'tried rhubarb, but her dunna get ony better.

Mrs. Thrifty—Well, I'll see if I can get you a little; but I should not wonder if these *byes* have not got it all in their *Pository*; what stories I and John shall find to-night!

Dobbins—Ay, ma'am, I've a complaint against *sum o' your lads*; (*plague on 'em!*) they're always in mischief.

Mrs. Thrifty—You're right, Mr. Dobbins, I can give 'em a good *cracker* in that respect; but pray what have 'em bin about?

Dobbins—Why, they'n killed me a couple a geese, they han, and throwed 'em, be hanged if I knows where; and moreover they'n driven my *waggin* and *hosses* along the lane, I dunna know how far *yander*.

Mrs. Thrifty—Bless me! *sich byes* I never did see in all my life! I dare say they've driven 'em ali into their *Pository*. (*Aside.*) But I'll find your horses and geese afore night, never fear, Mr. Dobbins. I tell you what, you must know they'n got a *Pository*. Do you know what a *Pository* is, Mr. Dobbins?

Dobbins—Not I, ma'am.

Mrs. Thrifty—What a *hignorant* man! (*Aside.*)

Dobbins—Ay, ma'am?

Mrs. Thrifty—I was only saying, I 'sposed you didn't know what a *Pository* was; an I can't *subscribe* it to you unless you know'd a little *Latin*. But, *howsumever*, to make matters

short, I'll explain it to you in two words. It's a sort of a kind of a thing, where our *byes* puts every thing they can lay hold on, candles, butter, apples, no matter what, all goes in, and I'll lay my life your *waggin* and horses are gone there; so make up your mind till night, Mr. Dobbins.

Dobbins—Thank you, ma'am; I should *na* said a word about it, only I *wants* to fetch some *kanowbles* from *Brummagem*, very early in the morning. Good day, ma'am. (*Exit Dobbins.*)

Mrs. Thrifty sola.

Mrs. Thrifty—Fine goings on these indeed! But the imperent fellows shant *consult* me with impunity; I see I shall be necessitated to have 'em punished, but I can't help it. (*Enter John, in a hurry.*)

John—Five more *gemmen*, ma'am, and you must get 'em dinner immediately. Master says you must get 'em beds also.

Mrs. Thrifty—Five more *gemmen* come, and we to find beds for 'em all! But this is just their way; if there were no inns for thirty miles round they'd all be welcome here. I wish with all my heart they were all crammed into the *Pository*. (*Exit Mrs. T. in a flounce.*)

N. B. The rest of the piece is lost, but it is in this strain. The concluding scene ends with *Mrs. Thrifty* going to seek the *Repository*, and while in the act of searching, she falls into a hole prepared for the purpose, and the curtain drops, with *Mrs. Thrifty* up to her neck in mud, and a chorus of boys singing around 'Go to the devil and shake yourself.'

We have only space for another extract from the prose compositions; it is one with which we have been much pleased. It appears, from the 'Local Intelligence,' that a band paid a visit to St. Mary's, when some luckless wight 'had the effrontery, before an audience which was chiefly composed of Irish Catholics, to call for "The Boyne Water." This circumstance, which certainly sounds very problematical, and, if seriously intended, reflects little honour on the political integrity of an audience of British helots, drew forth the following indignant expostulation; it is written with great force and spirit,

and manifests so much of what is happily termed 'the inherent electricity of the Irish mind,' and withal chimes in so completely with the feelings of every unwilling bondsman of the emerald isle, on a leading cause of his enthrallment, that we feel a particular pleasure in laying before our readers

THE BOYNE WATER.

— 'Styg â infelicior undâ.'
 'What! call for "The Boyne Water!" English Catholics, and Oscotians, too, make so ill-timed a request! "The Boyne Water!" that inauspicious air, which has been anathematized by the voice of ages, and banished from the pale of every society that pretends the remotest approximation to Catholicity. "The Boyne Water!" that flambeau of discord, which has been sufficient at any time to ignite the gassy spirits of a high-souled people, and more effective than the torch of Hecate herself, has involved whole counties—nay, an entire kingdom, in one universal conflagration of animosity and hatred. "The Boyne Water!" That individual watchword of a domineering and exclusive faction; the worthy accompaniment of the "Memory immortal" only in infamy, and unfeeling disregard of solemn oaths, and plighted faith; the talisman of the Orangeman in his drunken orgies; and the almost proverbial term of opprobrium unfeelingly flung, to add insult to injury, upon the fettered children of Erin: and not upon them alone, but upon the Catholic public in general; for from Ireland their interests are inseparable, and with her, fame or infamy is a common heritage: the question is not here betwixt English and Irish; but the case in debate stands, Orangeism *versus* Catholicism, or—*quod idem sonat*—persecution the most bloody *versus* endurance the most exemplary; intolerance *versus* liberality; chains *versus* freedom. "The Boyne Water!" an air, the mere passive sufferance of which, in his presence, is considered to stamp for ever a man's political character—and was actually so considered in the late election—and at once to forfeit all claim to the support and interest of a Catholic population. "The Boyne Water!" that dark and dreary river, whose stream ran purpled with

the warm and willing blood of Catholic loyalty, poured out with no stinting hand, for a man who had been disowned by his own subjects, but who might have rode back upon its waves, in triumph, to a throne, which his pusillanimity had deserted, if he had the daring to be a king, or the heart to be a conqueror! "The Boyne Water!" upon whose fatal banks an altar was erected, before which the hopes and liberties of the Catholic—English as well as Irish—were cloven down by an alien to both nations, or rather, by the womanish sensibility of the hereditary monarch of both, and a sacrifice was perpetrated from which the sickening memory revolts, and which the bursting tear of indignant feeling would fain blot from the historic page. Alas! for the inborn enthusiasm of the good old times; and still more, alas! for the innovations of modern liberality, that an air, burdened with such reflections, and carrying back the mind to so painful a retrospect, should ever be made the subject of request by a Catholic Oscotian!

But I will not believe that it could be so: I will not believe that the politics, and concomitant circumstances of the tune were understood: with regard to the majority of the audience, indeed, I know that they were not; and I should blush for the credit of *Alma Mater* to put upon record, and thus publish to the world, the otherwise disgraceful fact, were I not convinced that the call was not the offspring of maliciousness, but rather of the levity of the moment, and a desire to apply it, like the philosophical discharger, to the inherent electricity of the Irish mind, and, by thus drawing out the sparks, to constitute an amusing experiment; but the operator should have remembered that the electrical battery, as well as the charged thunder-cloud, must be approached with caution, and that the unwary practitioner may receive a blow where he sought for recreation. By no other interpretation of the case can I account for this seeming contradiction of principle, or satisfy my surprise that the Genius of Oscott did not rouse himself from his sacred repose,—so ungrateful and discordant must the sounds have smote upon his ear,—and, shaking his hoary locks

with the air of indignant authority, step forth, and forbid the *unholy rites to proceed!*"

The signatures to several pieces we think rather ill applied. Thus, for example, we have RIGA mourning over the 'Ruins of Kenilworth;' and MINA bewailing the unreal nature of 'human grandeur.' Adventurous names! but the lust of glory is the soul of boyhood. This reminds us of certain South Sea islanders, who, having learnt the titles of most of the leading characters of the British empire, presented themselves to the crew of an English vessel:—one with 'I am King George the Third;' another claimed respect as the Prince Regent; a third was Lord Liverpool, to the no small amusement of the ship's company. Our young knights of the goosequill will understand us; the names of the Muses, or some other more allied to literature, were surely more classical and appropriate.

Of the poetry of this little journal, in a general way, we think more highly than the prose. There is a degree of freshness of thought about many of the pieces which is very gratifying; for, as we before observed, it is redolent of youth. In several instances, however, this is abundantly

compensated for by some very dull and flat writing; and we are almost inclined to accuse the editors of want of discrimination for giving insertion to such wishy-washy lines as 'Friends that are far away,' or tautological nonsense as 'On the exclamation of Cherea.' The authors of such effusions ride but mere cart-horses, and sorry ones too, on the Heliconian mount; perhaps they were introduced to show off, in stronger contrast, by their awkward 'labouring up the steep ascent,' the nimbler evolutions of Pegasus; but, as such antitheses are of common occurrence, and painful in the repetition, we advise friends T. and CLIO to turn their *steeds* to the more useful occupations of life, particularly as they might unluckily get overstrained or spavined in so unequal a course.

There are raarks of considerable poetical talent in the 'Ode to the Emerald Isle,' 'Stanzas on Lord Byron,' and 'On the Ruins of Kenilworth;' as also in a very flourishing and easy sketch, entitled 'The Arab.'

The subjoined humourous vision, in the Peter Pindaric style, will afford considerable amusement to our readers.

THE GHOST OF A BIG PAIR OF BREECHES.

'The moon had just sunk 'neath the silver-capped hill,
The zephyr's last flutter scarce dimpled the rill,
The birds their sweet carols had chanted;
When pensive I wandered, as oft wont to do,
Where Oscott's proud turrets just glimmered in view,
Which old nurses oft told me were haunted.

'Twas silence around!—and the gloom of the night
Conjured up to my mind quite appalled with affright,
A crew of hobgoblins and witches;
When sudden, a something attracted my eye,
For headless and shapeless came fluttering by,
The ghost of a big pair of breeches.

The birds of the night flew away from the glens,
The birds of the forest slunk into their dens,
The frogs leaped from the banks to the ditches,
The dogs howled around a responsory yell,
At the sight of this oddity just come from hell—
— An enormously big pair of breeches.

My knees scarce supported my trembling weight,
I sunk on the ground quite prepared for my fate:
The whole frame of my body was shaken;
My hair bristled up, as the spectre advanced,
While around him ten thousand grim blue-devils danced,
And I screamed just as if I'd been taken.

- “But resuming the man, more collected I grew,
And began to conjecture—the nearer I drew—
’Twas some wretch that had buried his riches :
“Then tell me,” I cried, “Oh, thou soul-freezing sprite !
Why roams thy pale ghost on the wings of the night—
Speak boldly thou big pair of breeches !”
“Then list,” cried a voice, “and a tale I’ll unfold,
That will make thy flesh creep, and thy young blood run cold ;
Of devils, hags, beldames, and witches !
Red-hot I’m just come from the regions below,
My name and my nature, young man, wouldst thou know—
I’m the ghost of a big pair of breeches.
“Years, threescore and seven, of labour and strife,
Saw me buffet the storms and the tempests of life,
Exposed to all winds and all weathers ;
But the fates had decreed, and the death-dealing dart
Last night aimed a blow—oh, it struck to my heart !
And whisked my soul clean from the leathers !
“And, oh ! could I tell, what you must not yet know,
When they hurried me down to the regions below,
Oh, the Furies !—I thought they would tear me !
But so filthy was I,—so disfigured and worn,—
So battered,—so ragged,—so greasy and torn,—
That the devil himself would not wear me !
“So here a poor exiled, disconsolate sprite,
I am doomed to be tossed in the storms of the night,
Condemned for ten ages to wander ;
Until my poor figureless carcass be laid
Where the yew-tree extends its rank dew-dripping shade,
And buried just fifty yards under.
“But, hark ! for the cock his first matins has sung,
And the breeze of Aurora has stiffened my tongue”—
Away flew the ghost and the witches !
With rapture I welcomed the dawning of day,
Whilst the poplars low bending seemed softly to say,
“Oh ! unfortunate big pair of breeches !”
“And look well to thy own, for they’re ragged behind,”
Cried the ghost, as he rode on the wings of the wind,
“And I see that they’re out at the stitches ;”
’Twas so,—my own trowsers began to grow stiff,
And they felt—oh, what horrors !—they felt just as if
They would follow the big pair of breeches ! !”

The *alumni* of St. Mary’s, it appears, have a yearly *Saturnalia*, which they term ‘The Greek Play-day,’ as a kind of reward and encouragement, we presume, for their labours in Grecian literature. We remember, with pleasure and regret, these gala days of our boyhood ; and even now we could join with hearty

glee the chorus of buoyant youth in the burden of the beautiful song composed for the occasion, which we find in No. I. of ‘The Oscotian.’ Conviviality could not desire more inspiriting words, and our own ‘Irish Melodies’ would supply music equally attractive. With these ‘soul-stirring’ lines we conclude our extracts.

SONG FOR THE GREEK PLAY-DAY.

- ‘Oh ! let not the voice of the songster be wanting
On the day of the laud and the language of bards !
But the pæan of joy let each tongue join in chanting,
Now that freedom the toils of past labour rewards.

Chorus.

- ‘Then pledge me the wine-cup with roses surrounded,
Our voices in chorus let harmony twine ;

Touch the lyre!—there's a chord in each heart will be sounded;
 And wit lies in each liquid ruby of wine.
 Oh! such days are green islets in life's stormy ocean
 On which the glad sunbeams of joy gaily sport;
 Here awhile let us stay, then our bark's onward motion,
 And seize the bright boon, for its durance is short.
 'Then pledge me, &c.
 Were old Time with his hour-meting glass to sweep by us,
 Such a scene would entice the grey conqueror in,
 And the mirth of this moment would make him so joyous,
 His sand he'd exchange for an hour glass of wine.
 'Then pledge me, &c.
 What reck we if not without troubles we sever
 The fruit of improvement from science's tree?
 In a red sea of wine we will whelm them for ever,
 And our memories shall be but of joyance and glee!
Chorus.
 Then pledge me the wine-cup with roses surrounded,
 Our voices in chorus let harmony twine;
 Touch the lyre!—there's a chord in each heart will be sounded,
 And strike a bright joke from each sparkle of wine.

'Each liquid ruby of wine' is a very happy idea; but we do not see any reason why 'Amicus' in this, and the 'red sea,' should confine his eulogium to the red blood of the grape alone, to the prejudice of the many excellent white wines.

Quot capitum vivunt, totidem studiorum Millia.

In concluding our remarks, we again

repeat that we have been much pleased with the display of youthful talent, which this curiosity of literature (for so, we think, we are justified in terming it) embodies. Were the matter less interesting, or the circulation public, we should apologize to our readers for indulging ourselves in such lengthy extracts; but, we trust, the introduction of them does not stand in need of an excuse.

THE LAST WISH.

By Thomas Furlong, Author of 'Plagues of Ireland,' &c.

I WOULD not wish from life to go
 'Midst nameless ghosts enlisted,
 Like those who leave no mark to show
 That such have e'er existed:
 I would not die the death of those
 Whose bonds obscurely sever;
 On whom Time's portals seem to close,
 And shut them out for ever:
 I would not moulder 'midst the throng
 Who rot, no tidings giving,
 Save that they linger here, among
 The things that once were living:
 Nor would I wish to find my name
 With showy crimes united;
 Nor stop, that doubtful wreath to claim,
 By blood or misery blighted.
 Nay! I would wish when rest is mine,
 When this frail flesh must perish;
 To live in some soul-stirring line,
 That freeborn men might cherish.
 Ay! I would like my name to be
 From each dark doubt protected;
 Coupled alone with liberty,
 With man's best hopes connected.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN'S PROTESTANTISM.

* Whether then the principles which regulate the social intercourse of our ecclesiastical system be such as to promote or disturb the harmony of social order, it is in the power of all men to decide.—*Dr. Magee's late Charge.*

It has been observed by the American philosopher, that those religious founders who committed their doctrine to writing uniformly failed to obtain proselytes; while, on the contrary, those who confined themselves to oral communication generally became the founders of new sects. Dr. Magee, with a spirit originating either in hardihood or an ignorance of its consequences, has disdained to leave his Protestantism where he found it—enveloped in mystery; he has given it a tangible, though not a consistent, form; and henceforth the doctrine which he at least holds can no longer elude our grasp. Hitherto Protestantism was a kind of religious cameleon; it did not, it is true, subsist on air—*vide* its sleek parsons—but it nevertheless assumed all hues at will. The thirty-nine articles were sworn to this day as true and necessary, and to-morrow impugned as false and vicious. Hoadly virtually denied the divinity of Christ; and a modern bishop has defined his religion to consist in a hatred of Popery, by which he means Catholicity. Is this system of inharmonious order to continue? Is Protestantism to charm only by variety? Perhaps, in the nature of things, this is inevitable—unavoidable. Catholics, therefore, ought to contend with individuals rather than with the collective body; for, as the doctrines of the Established Church are evanescent and variable, the supporters of it have an advantage denied to those whose creed is fixed and tangible. For my part, I do not understand the policy which is content to act always on the defensive: it may indicate, like the placid lion among angry but inferior animals, a consciousness of strength and superiority; but, where these attributes are disputed, such conduct may be construed, and has been construed, into a proof of cowardice—of pusillanimity. Even prudence—which good men sometimes adduce as an apology for bad actions—would dictate a different course—would argue for carrying the war into the
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enemy's camp—would persuade us to examine the doctrines of those who are in the constant habit of impugning ours. Were this done, and done quickly, the No-Popery scribes would have something more to do than sneering at confession, and jesting about the pope. It would then appear, I am convinced, that Protestants have but little cause to pride themselves upon either the liberality or purity of their doctrines—upon the Reformation, or the Established Church.

I think it can be proved—I think I shall prove—that Protestantism, as defined by Dr. Magee in his late charge, is not calculated to promote human happiness—at least in this world—that it is inconsistent with national liberty, and opposed to the harmony of the social system. I do not mean to say that Dr. Magee's doctrine is the doctrine of the Established Church; it may or may not, for all I know; but, if it be, my arguments will equally apply to it as to the religious tenets of the Archbishop of Dublin. The following extract from his grace's late charge contains the pith or marrow of his principles.

‘Our church is explicit in declaring that THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION ALLOWS THE PRINCE TO “RULE ALL ESTATES AND DEGREES COMMITTED TO HIS CHARGE BY GOD, WHETHER THEY BE ECCLESIASTICAL OR TEMPORAL; AND TO RESTRAIN WITH THE CIVIL SWORD THE STUBBORN AND EVIL DOERS OF ALL DESCRIPTIONS, WHETHER THEY BE OF A SPIRITUAL OR OF A MERELY TEMPORAL CHARACTER.” Desirous to lay the foundation deep of a cheerful submission to the sovereign, the magistrates, and the laws, she is studious to imprint on early childhood the valuable lesson—“to honour and obey the king.” This lesson, which is early taught and late inculcated, is also without reserve or qualification—the spirit of obedience to the king and to the laws universally enforced, without reference to any ecclesiastical authority to

learn in what cases that obedience may be conscientiously withheld. Again, in the daily services of our church, prayers are offered up for the welfare of the sovereign, both temporal and eternal, "whilst we and all his subjects" are reminded of our obligation "faithfully to serve, honour, and *humbly* obey him;" and the monarch, at the same time, kept in recollection that his authority is derived from the King of kings, and is given to him for the great ends of promoting the glory of God, and the happiness of his people; and, that he may employ his authority for these ends, is made the subject of a special petition from his people. Again, it must be particularly observed, that our church does not regulate her petitions for the civil ruler by caprice, by worldly policy, or by *party* zeal, but by the word of God. Whatever be *their* character or conduct, hers is uniformly dutiful and loyal, making prayer and supplication for those in authority, that we may lead peaceable lives in all godliness, and honesty. She points out to men of the world the path of duty; and then leaves them to manage it without her interference. She meddles not with the politics of the day, nor troubles herself about abstract questions respecting civil compacts between the prince and people, nor about their respective privileges under the various forms of government that may exist, but satisfies herself with the simple facts as they rest upon apostolic authority, "that the powers that be, are ordained of God, and that subjects are to submit themselves to every ordinance of man *for the Lord's sake*." Does this justify the vulgar objection, that the Established Church is a *political engine*, and that the clergy are the *hired mercenaries of the state*?

With great submission to his grace, I will undertake to answer his concluding interrogation in the affirmative. Beyond all question the religion which teaches the above slavish and *unscriptural* doctrine must be a 'political engine,' and its clergy *must* be the 'hired mercenaries of the state.' In the nature of things it could not be otherwise: the exploded and

abominable doctrine of the deposing power was less at war with the rights and interests of the subject than this. In that case the king was not regarded as infallible; it was inferred that he might do wrong—that he might deserve to be dethroned—and consequently it did away with that stupid blind veneration called loyalty; by which is understood a regard for the person of the king, rather than for the laws. But, according to this doctrine of the archbishop, Christianity commands the subject to *humbly* obey the king—nay, more, that the king, according to the religion promulgated by Jesus Christ, who disdained the show of majesty, and who avoided a contact with royalty, is authorised, and by consequence commanded, to PERSECUTE all who do not believe as he does. Persecution must be an inherent principle in this Protestantism, since it teaches the reprehensible doctrine, that the monarch is allowed 'to restrain with the CIVIL SWORD the stubborn and evil doers of all descriptions, whether they be of a SPIRITUAL or TEMPORAL character.'

Hear that, ye clamourers against Popery—ye advocates of the Reformation! I hope that this is not the doctrine of Protestants; I am certain it is not the doctrine of Catholics. I am, if possible, still more positive that it is not the doctrine of the New Testament. 'We affirm,' says Paley, 'that, as to the extent of our civil rights and obligations, Christianity hath left us where she found us—that she hath neither altered nor ascertained it—that the New Testament contains not one passage which, fairly interpreted, affords either argument or objection applicable to any conclusions upon the subject that are deduced from the law and religion of nature.'

If this be true, and Paley is a Protestant authority, Dr. Magee's Protestantism, which makes the king *supreme* head of the church, is *not* founded on the Scripture. I should tremble for his grace's orthodoxy, were I not assured that there is no standard to judge by—no tribunal to appeal to but private judgment—a most convenient rule for preserving uniformity.

One of the most frequently urged objections against the Church of Rome—and one which has almost effectually blinded Englishmen to the real state of the case—is, that she teaches a slavish submission to existing authorities. Perhaps this is partially true, where the Catholic religion is the established church—where the Catholic clergy are the hired mercenaries of the state; but, be it observed, this applies not to Catholicity, but to an Established Church. The religion of Catholics is a spiritual thing, which disclaims the interference of temporal rulers, and consequently can exist, and does exist, where it is not the religion of the state. In fact, it never appears in so great parity as where it is disconnected with the government. The Church of England, according to Dr. Magee's definition, on the contrary, is essentially political; it connects itself with the king, whether he be deist or fool, an infidel Frederick or a pious Louis—by making him its supreme head—its ecclesiastical head. The absurdity of this needs no comment, but its sequence is full of instruction; for it shows that this Protestantism must inculcate slavish tenets. That it does so—that its tendency is to do so—its history sufficiently proves. Within the present month a parson Vaughan has preached at Leicester the *divine right of kings*; says monarchy is the only government Christians ought to tolerate; and, in the same strain of pure reasoning, told his congregation that all money belongs to the king; that it is only lent to his subjects until he shall want it. And why? Because his majesty's profile figures on one side of our coins!!! All this he found, no doubt, in the New Testament—the result of his private judgment!

'The constitution of the Church of England,' says one of the most profound philosophers this country ever produced,* 'had even a stronger tendency than that of Rome to render its clergy devoted to the interest of the crown. They were more uniformly dependent upon the sovereign; who, by the annihilation of the papal supremacy, became, without a rival, the acknowledged head of the church,

and obtained the entire disposal of the higher ecclesiastical dignities.'

'But although,' he continues, 'the different religious parties in England were thus disposed to embrace those opposite political systems, their natural dispositions, in this respect, were sometimes warped and counteracted by peculiar circumstances. For some time after the accession of the house of Stuart, the terror of the restoration of Popery, which had been inspired into every description of Protestants, produced an extreme jealousy of the king, on account of his marked and uniform partiality to the Roman Catholics; and united the church of England with the dissenters in opposing the designs of the crown. This was visible through the whole reign of James the First, and a considerable part of the reign of Charles the First, during which the nation, exclusive of the Roman Catholics, and a few interested courtiers, acted with wonderful unanimity in restraining the encroachments of the prerogative.'

'To form a proper notion of the effects arising from this union, we must consider the state of religious differences in those times. How inconsistent soever it may seem with the genuine principles of religious reformation, the primitive reformers, of every denomination, were no less destitute than the Roman Catholics of that liberality of sentiment which teaches men to indulge their neighbours in the same freedom of opinion which they claim to themselves. They were, all of them, so highly impregnated with a spirit of bigotry and fanaticism as to regard any remarkable deviation from their own tenets in the light of a damnable error, which ought, by every possible means, to be corrected or suppressed; and, for the attainment of this object, they were easily excited to brave every danger, and to submit to any inconvenience or hardship. Their interference, therefore, was always formidable to the civil power, and became frequently the chief cause of revolutions in government.'

'In the latter part of the reign of

* Professor Millar.

Charles the First, the disputes between the king and the commons began to assume a different aspect. The apprehensions which were so long entertained of the Romish religion had then, in a good measure, subsided; and the public attention was engrossed by the arbitrary measures of the crown, which produced a very general opinion, that certain precautions were necessary for guarding against the future encroachments of the prerogative. Here the church of England appeared to follow her natural propensity, and her clergy almost universally deserted the popular standard. The Presbyterians and the Independents, on the other hand, stood forward as the supporters of the national privileges; and, while they became powerful auxiliaries to the cause of liberty, they derived a great accession of strength and reputation from the general tide of political opinions.

The restoration of Charles the Second gave rise to new religious combinations. The church of England, having now recovered her former establishment, could not fail to entertain a violent jealousy of those dissenters by whom her power had been overturned; and she was led, of course, to co-operate with the Roman Catholics, in promoting the arbitrary designs of the monarch. The cry of *church and king*, and the alarm, that *the church was in danger*, were now sounded throughout the nation, and were employed on every critical emergency, to discredit all endeavours for securing the rights of the people.

The barefaced attempt of the infatuated James the Second to re-establish the Roman Catholic religion in England, tended once more to break down these arrangements, and to produce a concert, between the leading men in the church and the Protestant dissenters, for the purpose of resisting the unconstitutional measures of the king. As this concert, however, had arisen from the immediate fear of Popery, it remained no longer than while that fear was kept alive; and accordingly the revolution in 1688 was hardly completed, before these loyal ecclesiastics began to disclaim the part they had acted, and returned with

fresh ardour to their congenial doctrines of passive obedience and non-resistance.

What then becomes of the claims which Protestants of the church of England are continually making to a tendency to favour the political rights of the people?

Dr. Magee's Protestantism next commands our attention as a political religion. Its leading and most prominent doctrine is, that the king is the supreme head of the church—that is, Protestantism seeks to become the established religion in whatever country it is introduced. It holds out great allurements to the monarch to adopt it; and, whether he adopts it or not, it constitutes him the sole head, both in spiritual and temporal matters. Now such a religion could never have been taught by the Saviour of the world, because it is opposed to the best interests of man—toleration and liberty—neither of which can exist in a perfect state, where there is an established church; and wherever Protestantism predominates, it becomes, through necessity, the established religion. Like court parasites, it elevates the monarch to depress him—forces itself upon him—holds out to him the charms of power, and with impious flattery constitutes him Christ's viceroy, as well as sovereign over the country he rules. To his charge it commits the keys of heaven; while it teaches the people *humbly* to obey him. Does the New Testament teach this? Yet Dr. Magee tells us Protestantism is agreeable to the word of God.

Of all established churches, a Protestant Established Church is necessarily the worst. It must either become a persecutor, or generate swarms of sectaries. Unlike Catholicity, it possesses no auxiliaries to preserve piety and Christian influence over the people; it has no subordinate orders; paid by the state, it has no need of courting the good opinion of the public, or practising those virtues and austerities which give evidence of sincerity; and where this is not the case it must lose its hold upon the people. They will seek pastors of a different character—they will not tolerate either luxury or immorality in their religious

teachers. This has been proved by a writer in this magazine, in one of the most original articles ever written; * and it is further proved in the fact that England abounds at this moment with dissenters, and that the church is literally deserted for the conventicle.

A Protestant Established Church is necessarily inconsistent with apostolical simplicity and poverty; its bishops become the 'hired mercenaries of the state;' they owe to the sovereign all their present consequence, and if they are ambitious they look up to him for further promotion. It is quite natural that they should become the creatures of his will—it is quite natural that they have been the advocates of every arbitrary measure for the advancement of the prerogatives of the crown—it would be quite unnatural if they were not; for man, be he bishop or priest, ecclesiastic or layman, is honest and independent in proportion as he is distant from temptation. For the same reason the inferior clergy are subservient and sycophantic. From the people they have nothing to expect—from government patronage every thing. That the circumstance of their situation produces its effects, is evident from the fact, that the Protestant clergy of England adopt invariably the politics of their patrons. As the greater number of presentations are placed in the hands of government, or the creatures of government, is it any wonder that the Established Church is a political engine, and that the clergy are the hired mercenaries of the state?

Again, the Protestant establishment presents itself as mischievous in another way. Unlike the church of Rome, it imposes no restraints on its ecclesiastics which it does not impose upon every member of its community, if it imposes any. Its clergy may surround themselves with a wife and family—they may hunt, fish, and do every 'fashionable thing' that other men may do. They have only to put on a black coat, and an annuity supplied by the state qualifies them to take their station among the gentry of the land. An evil of great political magnitude proceeds from this facility of mounting the cassock. The aristocracy—where the law of entail

exists—naturally drive the younger branches of their families into the church—a provision is there for them. These, having adopted the religious character through motives of interest, cannot be expected to be strict in their duties, or even particularly moral in their habits. All they want is money; and as the aristocracy form—in fact constitute—the government, this money they will have. Every new grant is providing a fund for the future bantlings of noble houses.—Against this the people may murmur—there will be no redress; and why? because appeal must be made to those whose decided interest it is to uphold the inviolability of church property—they have sons and brothers subsisting on it—they have more sons and brothers in waiting to partake of it.

Hence secession from the established church—and hence additional taxation, consequently additional misery. She prevented sectarianism as long as she could—she persecuted dissenters, until open persecution was no longer feasible—she now does it covertly; yet this church, we are told, is tolerant!

As an established church, therefore, Protestantism stands exposed to unanswerable objections. If favoured by the sovereign, it is opposed to the happiness of the subject; if not favoured by the monarch, it stands opposed to the tranquillity of the state. 'The clergy of every established church,' says Adam Smith, 'constitute a great corporation. They can act in concert, and pursue their interest upon one plan and with one spirit, as much as if they were under the direction of one man; and they are frequently too under such direction. Their interest as an incorporated body is never the same with that of the sovereign, and is sometimes directly opposite to it. Their great interest is to maintain their authority with the people; and this authority depends upon the supposed certainty and importance of the whole doctrine which they inculcate, and upon the supposed necessity of adopting every part of it with the most implicit faith, in order to avoid eternal misery. Should the sovereign have the imprudence to appear either to deride or

* Review of Cobbett's History of the Protestant Reformation.

doubt, himself of the most trifling part of their doctrine, or from humanity attempt to protect those who did either the one or the other, the punctilious honour of a clergy who have no sort of dependency upon him, is immediately provoked to proscribe him as a profane person, and to employ all the terrors of religion in order to oblige the people to transfer their allegiance to some more orthodox and obedient prince. Should he oppose any of their pretensions or usurpations, the danger is equally great. The princes who have dared in this manner to rebel against the church, over and above this crime of rebellion, have generally been charged too with the additional crime of heresy, notwithstanding their solemn protestations of their faith and humble submission to every tenet which she thought proper to prescribe to them. But the authority of religion is superior to every other authority. The fears which it suggests conquer all other fears. When the authorised teachers of religion propagate through the great body of people doctrines subversive of the authority of the sovereign, it is by violence only, or by the force of a standing army, that he can maintain his authority. Even a standing army cannot in this case give him any lasting security; because, if the soldiers are not foreigners, which can seldom be the case, but drawn from the great body of the people, which must almost always be the case, they are likely to be soon corrupted by those very doctrines.

The Protestant clergy deprived James the Second of his throne—they intimate something similar at present; for his grace of Dublin expressly lays it down as a fundamental rule, that the sovereign cannot prescribe in favour of the Roman Catholics. An established church—no matter what the religion—is every way bad; a Protestant established church is decidedly opposed to national happiness.

Again, the Protestantism of Archbishop Magee presents itself as peculiarly intolerant. It teaches that the king has power, and of course ought to exercise that power, to slay with the civil sword the evil doers, whether lay or ecclesiastical, by which we are to understand that he ought to inter-

fere in spiritual as well as temporal affairs. Where such despotic and unchristian doctrines are taught by the clergy of an established church, if there be not persecution it is no fault of the predominant religion, or its tenets. But facts relieve me from the necessity of resorting to arguments to prove this. The disabilities under which Catholics and Dissenters labour, are living testimonies of Protestant persecution; and Dr. Magee has said that the king cannot prescribe in favour of Catholicism, or of any religion which has any other rule of faith than the Scriptures. Here is a divided allegiance; for the obvious meaning of all this is, if the king does not as Protestantism teacheth, he is not entitled to our allegiance. It is totally impossible to put any other construction on his grace's sophistry.

Catholicity being the religion of the vast majority of the civilized world, and being the religion of the one-third of the people of these kingdoms, it follows of course that any religion which teaches that Catholics cannot be admitted to civil rights is nothing more or less than—A CURSE, and ought to be held up to rational and Christian men as an object of universal detestation—as a creed pregnant with evil, and opposed alike to human happiness and personal freedom. Yet this, forsooth, is the religion so much lauded! this the religion which keeps Ireland in misery because she will not adopt it! this the pure, edifying thing which Catholics ought not to expose! Away with pusillanimity! the time is come to apply the test of truth to a Protestant Established Church, and see how far it deserves the encomiums of its votaries.

It must be quite unnecessary to offer any arguments to prove that the civil power has nothing to do with the spiritual concerns of the subject. A man's religion is an abstract affair between himself and his God: if he hold mischievous tenets, they are harmless unless they lead him into acts at variance with his duty as a citizen; then, and not till then, he becomes amenable to the civil authorities, not for his religion but for his misconduct. Protestantism, however, teaches a different doctrine; but hap-

pily the persecuting principle of the Established Church is nullified by its inherent imperfections. Being, at best, only another system reformed, it follows that it cannot be perfect: some may think a re-reformation necessary—they have thought so; and, as private interpretation of Scripture texts is the acknowledged rule for all men, it was very natural that there should be nearly as many religions as men. Is not this the case? Has not England been overrun with sectaries? And, though a late facetious writer approves of the numerous rills into which the stream of Protestantism

diverges, we may doubt their fructifying qualities if the source from which they spring be poisoned. Still it must be admitted that a multiplicity of religions is favourable to civil liberty, by rendering religious persecution impossible.

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. It may not be unnecessary to observe here that I have not as yet received the authorised version of Dr. Magee's charge. When that comes to hand, perhaps some further observations may be rendered necessary.

R. O'R.

TALES BY THE O'HARA FAMILY.*

MR. BANIM seems determined to rival the Great Unknown in the number, at least, if not in the quality, of his works. This is the third publication of the O'Hara Family within the last eighteen months; and, though somewhat superior to the second, it is decidedly inferior to the first. We shall, however, defer our remarks until we have laid an analysis of the first tale, 'The Nowlans,' before the reader.

The scene of this tale is principally laid in the Tipperary mountains. A worthy farmer has got—a very common case—four children, two sons and two daughters. The youngest son, John Nowlan, the hero of the tale, is intended for priests' orders; not because he had a vocation, or that his parents were particularly pious, but because it was considered the most eligible pursuit for a farmer's son, who had an elder brother. Before John had proceeded very far with his Latin and Greek, he renders a little service to Aby Nowlan, a low and vulgar debauchee—a species of a drunken stupid squire hardly to be met in Ireland in our day—though Mr. Banim's details relate to modern times. Aby, though a bachelor, was the father of more children than would people the founding hospital; and, at the moment of the young student's introduction into his house, had beneath his roof a Mrs. Carey, in the capacity of mistress, with a numerous offspring of

illegitimates. For one of these, Maggy, a girl of twelve years old, John, then only fourteen, conceives a strong attachment, which, in due time, ripens into an unholy passion. Accidental interruptions on one or two occasions prevent them from plunging into crime, to which the young lady was particularly prone. This part of the tale, on which the author has bestowed much reprehensible labour, borders a little on indecency.

It was hoped by John's parents that his introduction into the family of his supposed wealthy uncle would supersede the necessity of his persevering in his intention of entering the church, and accordingly his studies were neglected. In a few years, however, his eyes were opened. Aby, through neglect and extravagance, became dependent for subsistence on John's father; and John himself, amidst some moments of repentance, had some notions of renewing his studies. Unfortunately, Mrs. Carey and her daughter, Maggy, settled in the immediate neighbourhood. At sight of the young wanton, John is once more partially led astray; but, to his great mortification, she becomes *encienté* by a stranger, whose name John in vain endeavours to discover.

'One morning that "a station" of confession was appointed to be held in his father's house, he sought, in avoidance of it, at an earlier hour than usual, one of his lonely haunts. He could not stand before the brow

* Tales by the O'Hara Family, Second Series. London: Colburn, 1826.

of his old guide, who was to preside on the occasion. In the country parts of Ireland, where chapels are far asunder, and the peasantry negligent of religious duties, it is the custom for the priest to name certain houses in his parish, to which he alternately repairs to hear the confessions of those in the immediate neighbourhood, thus making up for the want of more chapels, and, at the same time, leaving no excuse to the slumbering zeal of his sometimes refractory flock; and the meetings growing out of such arrangements are called "stations."

"As John sat in his solitary hiding-place, he heard the people troop by him from different paths, to comply with the summons of their pastor to meet him in Daniel Nowlan's house. Young and old, of each sex, passed him unseen; men so aged as to be scarce able to creep along; children, who, as they spoke of the duty they were about to discharge, lisped their comments to each other.

"Had he been a murderer skulking from justice, and these the officers of justice looking for him, and speaking of him as they went by, he could not feel more disturbed; his self-respect could not be more shaken; his spirit more crouching. At last, all had repaired to the house, and a dead silence surrounded him. Little relieved, he sat motionless; yet, in the pause, his soul filled with riotous thoughts. A light step approached him. He raised his head, and saw Maggy Nowlan.

"She came up without any appearance of her former anger, and her beautiful large eyes rested on his. He knew that she had for some time been recovered from the sufferings of a mother; and now, in renovated health, more rounded proportions, and with a bright blush mantling her cheek, John thought she had never looked so handsome. He started up; she extended her hand; he took it eagerly.

"Let us forget and forgive, John," she said: "we war both to blame; and I have the heaviest sorrowin."—You know all that has happened, but you don't know what I'm goin' to tell you. I am in want, John; my babby an me, an my poor mother, too;" she wept real tears;—"you loved me

once; if you love me still, give us a little help, John;" her eye, voice and manner, told the rest.

"Touched, fired, surprised, and maddened in a breath, he clasped her in his arms, and pressed his lips to hers. Then, catching her round the waist, they were walking away, when—"Stop, sir!" cried a loud, stern voice. Maggy looked in the direction whence it came, and fled precipitately. John muttered a savage curse, that died upon his tongue as his eye settled on the upright, though aged figure of the old priest, his relative and former guide and pastor.

"After a glance, his first impulse was to avoid an interview; but a dogged resentment urged him to confront the person who had given the interruption.

"Stop, sir, and hear a word from me!" continued the clergyman, coming close.

"I stop for you, sir, to hear whatever you have to say—and to ask you, in turn, why I am thus intruded upon." He advanced.

"Do you dare me, wretched boy? detected as you are in the very commission of sin?"

"I am not detected in the commission of any sin—and I *do* dare you—you or any man who will thus insult me." Again he advanced, clenching his fingers so desperately that the nails pierced the palms of his hands.

"The priest fixed upon him a glance, such as the maniac is tamed by, and after a pause, thundered out—"Come into the house, sir!"

"No," answered John, still sullenly, yet conscience-struck and confused by the command—"I do not intend to stir from where I am:—why should I go into the house?"

"Will you pretend to say you did not know of my business within the house this morning? Answer me, sir!—are you prepared to attend to your duty?"

John dropt his head, and was silent, but not softened.

"You *shall* come in, John Nowlan?" resumed the priest, seizing his hand—"I command you to attend me; refuse—struggle with me"—John did struggle—"fling me down, if you like, —I will quit you but with a struggle.

Who was the creature that left us? your poor partner in crime?"

"I tell you, sir"—shaking off the priest's grasp—"you wrong and slander me—you accuse me of sin I have not committed:—if I have erred—"

"Was it, then, but the sin of the mind, John?"—interrupted the clergyman—"can you make me sure of that?"—his voice grew kinder.

"Oh, sir,"—something wrought upon—"I was guilty in thought—very guilty—but no more."

"Thank God, a-vich, thank God! my heart gladdens at the word;—thank God, my poor, erring child; you are left pure for your great work yet. Give me your hands in mine. John; you were always my son; I always loved you; I will love you as dearly as ever; for you will again be the John Nowlan I was fond of: this moment you will turn again into your good courses; under your father's roof, and in the presence of your family and the poor people to whom you are one day to be a guide, you will kneel at your priest's knee, and make your peace with Heaven, and give a good example: you *will* come into the house, John; you will, my child, you will!"

"The old man held both his hands; his voice quivered; tears ran down his cheeks; the tears of zeal, duty, and affection. John Nowlan grasped convulsively the hands that grasped his; answering tears rushed from his eyes; he wept and sobbed like an infant. And in a few minutes he followed the old clergyman like a lamb; redeeming the promise made for him, entered humbly into his father's house; knelt down among the simple crowd there collected; and gave indeed the example that was expected from him.

"Two days after, he was living in the house of his reverend friend, his literary studies renewed, with the sincerest view towards that course of life to which he had been once destined: his sins repented of, and his heart purer and lighter than, since childhood, he had felt it."

John continued his studies uninterruptedly, until his three and twentieth year, and had returned all but a priest from the bishop's seminary at Lime-

December, 1826.

rick to spend the vacation at his father's house, when a new temptation accidentally fell in his way. A thunder storm obliged Mr. Long, of Long Hall, a relative of Mrs. Nowlan, together with his niece and nephew, Frank and Letty Adams, to seek shelter under the farmer's roof. On approaching the house, however, Mr. Long's horse took fright, and the rider must have been dashed to pieces, were it not for the timely assistance of our young student, who jumped through a window for the purpose of affording it. This led to acknowledgments of gratitude; and next day John and his sister Peggy, who had been educated at the nun's school at Cashel, became visitors at Long Hall. Every thing surprised the great man's guests, and the hero of the tale is represented more ignorant than a Catholic student admitted even to minor orders could possibly be. Under the tuition of Letty, however, with whom he was in love from the moment he first saw her, he improved, imbibed a taste for poetry, and became romantic.

"For a short and happy month John Nowlan talked and read poetry with Miss Letty. Mr. Long's library was open to him, when hers became exhausted, and he was indefatigable. Naturally quick, and eloquent too, his development in conversation of the new ideas he gradually gained, was marked by a vigour and freshness as new to the lady as to himself. She had never heard any thing like it—any thing so strong, so natural, so exciting, even on subjects with which early habit had rendered her familiar. If John was delighted while he spoke, merely to hear himself speaking, so was she to hear. The very occasional ruggedness and imperfection of his views and criticism had a nameless charm; and while his handsome eyes sparkled, and his fine features grew into play, she thought he looked a personification of the poetry he spoke.

"Miss Letty had a portion of romance in her soul, joined to all her accomplishments, tastes, and virtues. The sphere in which she had been educated, prompted, if it did not create, this principle. Without allowing a breath of impurity to visit her, it called out every delicate sensitive-

ness, every charming susceptibility, and not only left them all unchecked, but suffered some to become ill-directed, or self-directed, which often means the same thing. Religion was revered within its limit, but seldom invoked to preside over the heart. Virtue was not taught as chiefly dependent on prayer, watchfulness, self-knowledge, but rather on instinctive feeling. It is not meant that the young lady did not systematically kneel down to her prayers, or did not at all times repeat them very devoutly; but it is meant that a distrust of herself and an exclusive reliance on the help from above, seldom regulated her thoughts and actions. Most certainly she never wished to go wrong; never supposed she could, and never feared to do so; yet for the very latter reasons she was likely to do so. And for all these reasons she was likely, at the end of a month, to—fall in love with John Nowlan.'

'When an amiable and very young girl begins to feel love, it is well known she cannot hide it so effectually as to defy the eyes of, particularly, the person beloved. This leads to the admission, that, towards the end of his happy month, John Nowlan was not without suspicions (suspicions they should have been, but, alas! they were more like hopes) on the subject. Absorbed, entranced, day after day, with the new life he began to live, and with the presence and inspiration of her who had called him into it, never,—though he did not fear so,—never, even during the temptations of his erring boyhood, had he been so much off his guard. His feelings for poor Maggy Nowlan were distinct; from their distinctness, alarming; and therefore he might, if he liked, have struggled against them; even while coming on, they gave their rattlesnake warning: but the different kind of passion that now stole to his heart was unobservable, silent, insidious; a beautiful snake winding through fields of flowers to sting him as he lay asleep. Because his blood did not flame in the presence of the new syren, as it used to do by the side of his unhappy cousin, he never thought himself in danger. The very purity of the love he began for

the first time to feel, left him unguarded against its possible vehemence. He thought it was love he had felt for Maggy Nowlan, when it was but gross inclination; and although the experience of that early paroxysm still lurked in the pulses of his heart, ready to add a headlong rage to the maturity of his present delusion, yet because none of its wild throbbings now, in the first instance, disturbed him, the idea that he loved Miss Letty could not occur. When her manner, looks, and words conveyed, in spite of her, the first intimations of a growing love for him, he therefore rejoiced instead of trembling at symptoms that only seemed to bespeak what was, he thought, the liveliest ambition of his soul; a friendship and interest, harmless though strong and decided, on the part of a being whose good wishes were the highest honour he or any other person could receive.'

At the end of a month Peggy returned home, leaving her brother teaching Greek and Latin to Letty. Ere she departed, she hinted to John some intimations of her own unhappiness, and broached some doubts respecting the propriety of his continuing at Long Hall. This alarmed, but did not make him alter his resolution. On her way home, Peggy was met by a strange woman, who accosted her rather mysteriously, warned her to avoid Frank Adams, and was proceeding to lay violent hands on her when interrupted by Peery Conolly, the rake, a rejected suitor of Miss Nowlan's.

John continued at Long Hall imbibing love and poetry, but by no means at his ease; for certain indications about Frank gave rise to dislike on one hand, and apprehension on the other; for he suspected Master Adams was rather too attentive to Peggy.

'Upon an evening, about three weeks after Peggy had gone home, John walked out alone, half way towards his father's house. He had sprung up from a lesson he was giving to his pupil, seriously alarmed. Their hands, he could not tell how, had become gently clasped, and their mutual sighs often disturbed the lecture. So, he tore himself away, and uncon-

sciously sought the corrective of solitude. The night drew on, while he still remained abroad, a prey to the natural combats of his situation. It was a dark night, and he sat, completely hidden from every passing eye, behind an embankment. Steps approached; he peeped over, and saw two figures turning away into the deep gloom. One was Frank; the other a female; and, he concluded, no other than Peggy. He stole from his hiding-place, and ran headlong to his father's house, resolving to be there before Peggy could return, and so gain presumptive proof against her. To his surprise, when, hurried and agitated, he burst into the little kitchen, scaring as much as delighting his family, Peggy was calmly sitting by her mother's side, with every appearance of not having been out that evening. He recovered himself; went into his chamber for a book; came out; chatted awhile with the old people and her; and returned to Mr. Long's, satisfied that, however it had occurred, Peggy, if she was inclined to equivocate, could argue him down; astonished at the whole matter; confused in his notions of it; but still jealous of Mr. Frank.

Some evenings after, as he sat with Mr. Long and his nephew, a servant whispered John that a person waited to see him at the avenue gate. He went out; and, in the twilight, saw the same female who had startled Peggy on her path home from Mr. Long's house. We do not wish any mystery about this individual. It was Maggy Nowlan; but John did not at once recognise her: they had not met since the morning of the station.

"An *you* don't know me either, father John," she said, after her first salutation, and John's cautious nod.

"Yes—now I think I know the voice—yes"—looking closely into her face—"unfortunate Maggy Nowlan!—but how altered!—and what brings you here?—We all thought you were so settled in Dublin during the last four years, as to make a visit to your own country very unlikely for every reason."

"Yes, sir—(they tell me I must call you sir, now)—yes, sir, I am altered in the heart as well as the face; an yes, too, I was in Dublin all

this while, an I'll be again if you have no objections, settled, as you say—och! sich a settlin'!—you mane, because I'm a Dublin sthreet-walker now, I ought to be ashamed o' comin' home to see my mother?"

"God help you, poor creature; God forgive and convert you; and thanks be to his name that you cannot come to me this night, to accuse me as the cause of your fall—oh, thanks for that!—"

"Don't be in sich a hurry, priest John; how do you know I can't, if it was worth the while?—Do you think no man but the very last that turns her out to the world is to blame for a poor girl's ruin?—Do you think him that gives her bad fancies aforehand, an disturbs her young pace o' mind, an provokes her to sin, an then laves her to the provocation, only because he's a greater coward than another—do you think he has nothing to answer for?"

"Oh, I fear he has; indeed, I fear he has; and God forgive me, as well as you; God forgive us both, Maggy!"

"Well; that's not my business with you now, sir; what's past is past; what's to come is to be looked afther. There's only one word I want to say; take care o' your sister Peggy wid the young gentleman o' this house."

John started, and asked "Why? how?"

"They do be together in the fields at night," answered Maggy in a whisper.

"I feared as much—I knew as much—I saw them together last Wednesday night—did I not?"

"Did you? maybe you did, faith; where? was it in the three-corner field, outside o' the stubble-field near the well?"

"It was."

"Then, sure enough you seen 'em," resumed Maggy, after a short pause—"for I seen 'em too; so take care, I tell you, priest John; an bad an low crature as I am, an wid no great cause to care about you, see if I can't do a good turn as well as another; good night, sir. But there's another little word yet;—how do you speed wid your new scholar?"

He started more agitated than be-

fore; and, "What do you mean, Maggy?" he asked.

"Avoch, nothin'; only I know one that knows all about it; an all about *her* mind on the head of it, too; an this much is as thrue as the Gospel — Letty Adams loves you dearly, father John;" and Maggy walked away.

He stood speechless, gazing after her, as her receding figure blended with the falling night. He shook, he shivered; horror was his first sensation. Something like frenzy succeeded. With most cause to quarrel with himself, he burned to fix a quarrel on another person. Turning away from the last subject on which the eyes of his soul had been riveted, he allowed his mind to become exclusively occupied by Mr. Frank's practices towards his sister; and he suddenly walked towards the house, determined to seek an explanation from that young gentleman.

Ere he gained the hall-door, Mr. Frank, wrapped in a cloak, appeared coming towards him. This was fortunate, John thought, and he quickened his steps, holding himself erect, and looking more like a man that could ask questions, and impress himself as a man, than he had ever looked in his life before. Mr. Frank turned aside ere they met, as if to pursue his way over a stile; John hailed him.

"A fine night, sir."

"Ah! Mr. Nowlan," stopping; "why, yes; but rather damp, don't you think?"

"Not for a walk, sir," glancing over his person from head to foot.

"I thought but to take a turn here, and so threw on my cloak."

"Don't let me stop you, Mr. Frank, from any appointment you may have."

"Appointment — how, Mr. Nowlan?"

"I'll speak you fair at once, sir, for I find myself a poor hand at this cross play: you are going to meet my sister."

"Perhaps, even from John's manner, the young gentleman had been prepared for the question; at all events, it little moved or startled him.

"Well, sir; and *you* are going to meet my sister; all fair, you know," smiling good-humouredly.

"Hold, Mr. Frank; say nothing, even in jest, to touch my character as a clergyman; let us pass that imprudent jest, and take up the real subject: you have before now met Peggy Nowlan out of her father's house."

"Granted, freely; I have."

"On what pretence, sir?"

"I love her."

"With what views?"

"To marry her; I have told her so often; has Miss Nowlan never said as much to you?"

"Never: have you said as much to her father or mother?"

"No; but it is my intention to do so this very night, or certainly, tomorrow morning."

"Then I ask your pardon for mistaking your intentions, Mr. Frank: I wronged you a moment, and am sorry I did so:" giving his hand, and shaking Frank's violently.

"Tut, tut!" returning his shake, "you have done but your duty, Mr. Nowlan, and I respect you for it; perhaps I was most to blame in not sooner commencing an explanation: so, farewell; and now you know where to find Letty, I suppose?" still good-naturedly.

"Oh, come, come, now, Mr. Frank," answered John, forcing a laugh; "you're welcome to your jest; but enough of that, you know."

"Jest?" with an earnest tone, — "on my life, I treat the matter as no jesting matter, I assure you, and hope you do not, either, Mr. Nowlan."

"What, sir? what would you insinuate?" asked John, fiercely; the tiger conscience was again aroused.

"I insinuate nothing; I deal as plainly with you, as you have dealt with me; you surely cannot be ignorant that your attentions to Letty have produced what, along with your great personal merits, they were sure to produce — and could only have been meant to produce — a warm affection towards you?"

"Sir! Mr. Frank!"

"Indeed! and have you been so long astray on this point? I have heard of modesty, quite blind to its own merits, and to the results of them, but never met it before: well, I rejoice, at all events, to be the first to tell you your good fortune, sir; I

know the fact, be assured I do; Letty loves you as well as you love her, Mr. Nowlan."

"Oh God, oh God!" groaned John, hiding his face with his hands.

"What, man? there is nothing to be ashamed of, surely—between two young men, at all events; come, sir; let me congratulate you, and offer my best wishes and efforts for your happiness with my favourite sister: my good old uncle may prove the sole bar; he is a little high; a little touchy on that point, sir; but your own prudence, still aided by your merits, and a friend to help you on, may"—

"Mr. Frank—" interrupted John, bursting from his agonized and confused torpor—"stop, I entreat you, remember what you say, to what you would tempt—hurl me. You speak—even supposing all this to be true—even supposing I was wretch and villain enough to love your sister—you speak of it as if the only obstacle to my happiness—again supposing your divine sister to love me—was in our disproportioned situations in life; as if—"

"Why, what else can be in the way?"

"Good Heaven, sir! am I not a clergyman? a Catholic priest?"

"No, sir, I did not think you had received full orders, or that—"

"I have vowed my vow, sir."

"Well; that's rather unlucky; but still not such a bugbear, I think, when the only question now is to provide for my sister's happiness."

"You surprise me, sir,—you frighten me—but what can you mean?"

"Mr. Nowlan," with a soft and pleasing smile, "had you mixed more in the world, I should more readily answer your question: unconsciously, and, indeed, most unmeritedly, you are here, in your remote solitude, imposed on by little prejudices that the world—that man, in his really cultivated state—that enlightened men, of all sects—mark—of all sects—agree to laugh at and despise—have, in fact, made a common league to forget for ever—and joy to the human race, say I, for such a league; we long stood in need of it. You look surprised; I do not wonder: but, if you can bear with

me, let me say another word. What is all this silly division and subdivision in—I will not say religion, for that holy word means a very different thing—among sects then? Do you think the Author of true religion would ever have given us, first, wishes, impulses, and capabilities for virtuous happiness, and, next, a tyrant and unnatural code to shackle those wishes, paralyze those impulses and capabilities, and cheat us of that happiness? Do you think the world, the present improved world, actually contains one rational man willing to subscribe to a theory so blasphemous? Do you think that, for one, I would hesitate a moment in my honourable pursuit of your sister, on account of any sectarian nonsense which my nurse or my good mamma may have crammed into my helpless head? Do you think if the question were to lose Peggy, or give up calling myself what the people call me, a Protestant, and call myself any thing else her pretty mouth might dictate—do you think I would debate the childish quibble a moment? Or, suppose the case the other way, suppose they call me a Catholic?"

"Excuse me, sir," interrupted John;—"enough of this; I am, as I have told you, a Catholic priest."

"And the admirer of my sister," added Mr. Frank.

"Not with improper admiration," retorted John; flippantly calling to his aid the insincerity that always is the humble and ready servant of lurking crime.

"Then with an admiration that has roused her affections, Mr. Nowlan, and devoted to fervid passion a naturally fervid heart—I know my sister, sir."

"You may err in this opinion of her, sir; you may, you may: oh, God grant you have!"

"Impossible; and now it is my sole duty to guard her against future unhappiness."

"By suggesting to me, Mr. Frank, gracious powers! what an alternative! But, fare you well, sir: though I reject your hint, your sister's happiness shall be otherwise protected: through me she shall never have a heart-ache."

"Well, sir, good night; yet allow

me still to recommend to your thoughts a serious consideration of what strikes me as the best way of smoothing every thing:—what, in your situation, I would not hesitate to do; look closely, Mr. Nowlan, at the imaginary differences, and they will melt under your eye; it is all stuff and nonsense, at every side; what is really good at any side is as good at the other; believe me in that, sir; and many of your religion, even in Ireland—ay, many of your cloth, prove by their actions that they think so. I know more than one Catholic priest who has lately become a minister of the other profession, and is likely to do well in consequence. And that reminds me of a parting word; I do not suppose there could be a more effectual plan of winning my uncle to the match between you and little Letty—”

“The match, Mr. Frank?”

“Than by allowing him to see you in orders, in a persuasion that affords promise of fame and success; and in the clerical appointments of which, I know he has influence. Good night, Mr. Nowlan.”

He seized John's passive hand, shook it, and hurried down the avenue. John stood a moment inactive, his eyes buried in the earth; then he suddenly flung himself on his knees, clasped his hands, looked up, interrupted himself, started to his feet; rushed towards the house; left, with a servant whom he met in the hall, an apology to Mr. Long for not giving Letty her evening lesson, snatched a light, reached his chamber, cast himself on the bed, and so remained till morning.

Mr. Frank, continuing his walk, met, by the side of a little brook, in a lonesome little dell, not Peggy Nowlan, but her wretched cousin Maggy.

“You are late,” she muttered, as they faced each other, without any salutation.

“Speaking to that fool detained me,” he answered; “I met him by chance, and he forced upon me the conversation you know I had resolved soon to begin.”

“Well, an' how does it work?”

“Bravely, Maggy, bravely; he boggled at it to be sure, and he will boggle; but, one way or another, 'tis

enough for my purpose; he will never rest now, till he and my sweet sister know each other's minds at least; and so much done, every thing will follow:—they can't help it.”

“He'll never get over the scruple of conscience of his bein' a priest, Masther Frank.”

“You know nothing of that, Maggy; leave such parts of our business to me; I can tell you there goes on already, in priest John's breast, a battle that his good devil will win against his good angel. I have thrown out things that must bring him to the very state I want—uncertainty, doubt, confusion, and war of mind; things that seem to have a meaning, yet have none; general notions, begetting vague hopes and wild wishes; never trouble yourself about it, I say. You contrived to meet Miss Letty this evening?”

“I did; and told her all you bid me.”

“I hope it was not bungled; let me hear exactly how you managed it.”

“Just as you tould me, sir; I pretended that, being a poor relation of his, I had heard by chance of how he was dying and burning wid his love for her; pinin' an' pinin' away; an' afraid to let any one see it, much less herself; an' that he would kill me if he knew I ever spoke a word about it; an' I hoped she would never tell him.”

“Pretty well. How did she take it?”

“Like a frightened child; frightened at the first thought o' the thing she was dyin' for, her ownself; it's no joke that she loves him.”

“Who said it was? How could we work if it were?”

“Badly; but, Masther Frank, tell us one sacret; isn't it a bit unnatural for you to be schamin' the ruin o' your own—”

“My own sister, you were going to say; but here, again, Maggy, you prove stupid—if she runs away with this priest—if we can only bring that about—why then, Maggy, long life to the sole heir of Long Hall, you know, and to yourself, my Mag, as housekeeper of Long Hall. Miss Letty had no right to charm away from her poor brother Frank, one good half of the good fortune that, ere she came in her uncle's sight, was

wholly his; besides, how can she be ruined, as you say? The priest will be able, one way or another, to do as much for her as her sage father, the magistrate, ever could have done; and no more was she born to; no more should she expect."

"What's the rason the half wouldn't do you, Masther Frank? the half iv such a great estate is a power of loock; an' you know the Hall 'ud be yours, along wid it."

"Maggy, Maggy, ask no more foolish questions; the half would, this moment, be no more use to me than—no matter how much or how little:—*I want* the whole, and that's all. And before any of it comes, I shall want help some other way."

On quitting Maggy, whom he conjured not to follow him, Frank hastened to an appointed interview with Peggy. Contrary to his expectations she resolutely determined to make this assignation the last, but he treated her resolution very cavalierly, and on her sensitively retreating from him he proceeded to lengths that left his purpose no longer questionable. Peggy screamed, and instantly a stranger, Conolly the Rake, we presume, bounced over the ditch, levelled Master Frank, and bore away Peggy in his arms.—'Sweet was your fist,' said Maggy, who had watched the proceedings from a distance, with the intent of frustrating her paramour's design, not from any motive of virtue, but merely through an impulse of jealousy.

Frank now quits Long Hall on the pretence of proceeding to Dublin to renew his studies, but returned the same night, his arm tied up in a sling, having been wounded in a rencontre with robbers who had attacked and plundered the mail, having first killed both guard and driver. This incident seems to have been suggested by a well known transaction in Ireland not many years since, and we must anticipate the author, for we hate that mystery in which he delights, by informing the reader that Frank, in conjunction with an English thief, one of his former associates, had resorted to this measure as the means of raising money to meet the demands of some *Rooks* who had him in their power in consequence of similar robberies, with which they were ac-

quainted, committed by him in England.

In the mean time John wavers between love and duty—vibrates between apostacy and fidelity; but at length determines to adhere to his 'vows.' He had no sooner taken this resolution than he sought an interview with Letty, for the purpose of bidding her farewell. Being composed, however, of most inflammable materials, the contact was fatal; he became once more the victim of love, acknowledges his passion, and receives Letty's acknowledgments in return. In a fit of virtue—for all his fits are unaccountably sudden—he darts from his mistress, and hurries to his father's house, tries to renew his good resolves, but, in a subsequent interview with Letty, relapses.

Letty, however, gives good advice. John makes a suitable reply, and, firm in his purpose of proceeding to Spain to complete his studies, begs, as a last favour, that Letty, accompanied by her brother, will meet him at a certain place where he is to enter into the coach that is to bear him to Dublin.

John proceeds towards the appointed place, accompanied by his sister; but before he reaches it she quits John's side, and he meets Frank and Letty. Frank has a fowling-piece in his hand; and affecting to see a fox, hastens to have a shot at him. Immediately a shot is fired, Letty swoons away; and while John is endeavouring to assist her, Maggy appears and tells him Peggy is on her knees at a short distance soliciting Frank to make an "honest woman" of her. Fired with indignation, he makes towards the place, meets an old friar on the way, forces him along with him, and finding the parties as described by Maggy, he compels the friar to unite them in marriage; Peggy remonstrates in vain. Growing now desperate, John hastens to Letty, lifts her from the ground, and, placing her in the coach, proceeds towards the metropolis.

Without waiting to ask if this is probable, we must follow John to Dublin. Arrived in the metropolis, he sees the spire—a very pretty one—of St. George's church, and judging that a clergyman could not be far off, he hastens to Temple-Street. Being

directed to the house, we suppose, of the Rev. Mr. Bushe, he obtains an interview. The clergyman appears to have been a most obliging, kind gentleman, for the Græna Green parson could not have been more accommodating to a love-struck swain; he not only dispenses with their appearance in church, but actually performs the nuptial rites at the hotel, without a licence. It was a miserable nuptial day; and what added to John's poignancy was the circumstance of his vows depriving him of regarding Letty in any other light than that of a mistress—wife, we are told, she never could be to the man who was now united to her.

The gradual diminution of his little purse warned John to seek less expensive apartments than those they occupied in the hotel. Letty cheerfully accompanied him to an humble room in a house in Phibsborough, and for some time they lived comfortably on their mutual earnings as private teachers, Letty having turned her talent for drawing to account. This was the more necessary, as she was now in that state in which 'ladies wish to be who love their lords,' having besides received a letter from her brother Frank, saying her uncle had cast her off for ever. Accompanying this letter came two for John, one from Peggy, and another from Father Kennedy. The priest's letter thus concluded:

'Already, of course, you are a suspended priest; and your bishop awaits but your answer to this letter, ere he commands me to pronounce your name as accursed among your own people, from the altar of your own chapel, and by the lips of your own priest and relation, and oldest friend. I say to you, John Nowlan, tremble! But a few days stand between you and your earthly curse, and your long woe.'

But another misfortune awaited them; after four months, to their great surprise, their pupils began to decrease, and in a little time Letty was without even one, while John's had diminished to that solitary number. But even this one did not continue.

"Mr. — acquaints the Rev. John Nowlan, that he cannot, with satis-

faction or propriety, entrust the education of his son to a Roman Catholic clergyman who keeps a mistress."

John, devoid of a coat or hat, and Letty almost naked—for their clothes had been sold to support them—they madly quitted Dublin, and the next morning but two the unhappy man was discovered in a solitary house in a lonely field some distance from the metropolis, stupidly gazing on the corpses of Letty and her new-born infant! The charitable of the place interred them, without holding an inquest, we suppose, and John fled to his native hills, for the purpose, it subsequently appears, of shooting Father Kennedy for having cursed him from the altar. The priest, however, on seeing the blunderbuss presented at his breast, was far from being alarmed; he called upon John to do penance; the wretch intimated obedience by flinging away the deadly instrument, and quitting the country.

The remainder of the second volume, upwards of two hundred pages, is taken up with the details of Peggy's fortune, or rather of Frank Adam's iniquity. This wretch, whose atrocities are almost unnatural, endeavoured to triumph over Peggy's credulity; the poor girl, however, disliked him from the first night of their meeting, and sought to avoid him, but her brother's misconduct gave him an indirect influence over her. Frank represented John as completely in his power, and threatened to inform his bishop of his proceedings unless Peggy submitted to his wishes; she was too virtuous, however, to become his victim, and was soliciting his forbearance towards her brother, on her knees, when John, in his fury, compelled the friar to unite them. Frank rejoiced at this, for Peggy was now completely in his power, though her marriage was not legal. In a few weeks he became weary of his victim, and endeavoured to poison the baby in her womb; this was fortunately prevented. Mr. Long was acquainted with the misconduct of his nephew at the moment that Frank was apprehended for the former robbery of the mail; he escapes, and is subsequently condemned to die at the Old Bailey; his sentence, however, is mitigated into transportation for life, and on his

arrival in Van Dieman's land he deserts to the East Indies, enters a regiment to which John Nowlan belongs, and after a few years returns to Dublin with his corps. While here he plans the robbery of his uncle's house; his associates, Maggy and others, are taken, and he stabs himself in a Dublin police-office, in the presence of John Nowlan, his father, and two sisters. Peggy is married to the son of a worthy farmer, and John, we are told, is in a fair way of being received into the bosom of the church.

The first and most fatal objection to this tale is, that the main interest turns upon a misconception—upon a circumstance which could not have occurred. Mr. Banim, a Catholic, ought to have known that a secular priest—and John Nowlan was intended for a secular priest—never makes vows which prevent him from returning into the world until the very moment of ordination. We believe the bishop interrogates him at the altar on this very point. If we are right, and we understand that we are, the whole interest of the tale falls to the ground, and we are inclined to spurn the pusillanimous hero as a man who excites nothing but contempt. Indeed Mr. Banim is a dangerous advocate; in his Boyne Water he did no service to the Catholics, and while in the present work he endeavours to do justice to the members of his own commu-

nity, he contrives to draw a most unmiably—a most revolting—picture of Catholicity. He does not intend this, but the conduct of the Catholics towards John, and John's own conduct towards himself and the ill-fated Letty, can be construed into nothing but a bigotry and prejudice at variance with human happiness. But the incidents from which these take their rise are some of them improbable—the most important of them impossible. This latter objection applies generally to the tale; it is too melo-dramatic—it is too unnatural; it is not nature—it is any thing but a picture of Irish life. Still the author is a man of great powers, great talents, and surpassing genius; and because that he is, we have quoted largely from a tale peculiarly objectionable—both in a religious and national point of view. We trust Mr. Banim will not feel displeased with our candour; he has merits enough to atone for his many defects; and, as these proceed from an immatured judgment, and a taste not sufficiently chastened, they are by no means incurable. When we meet him next we hope to have less to censure, and more to commend.

The second tale, 'Peter of the Castle,' is common-place as to plot, and improbable as to incident; it contains, however, one or two vivid sketches of national manners.

MEMOIR OF JOHN BRIC, ESQ.

It is a remarkable fact, that most of those who have distinguished themselves at the Irish bar have been the authors of their own fortunes—they achieved greatness; and we believe the subject of our memoir is indebted solely to his talents and personal exertions for the rank he already holds in the estimation of his countrymen.

Mr. Bric was called to the Irish bar in Easter Term, 1824; and, shortly after that period, he appears to have taken a very active part in the troubled politics of his native country. The first term that he was called to the bar he was retained by the Catholic Association to conduct an inquiry which was ordered by the Irish Government into the conduct of a Mr. Browne, a chief constable of police, December, 1826.

in the county of Wexford. Mr. Browne happened to have been a man of very considerable interest; and, being nearly connected with the Marquis of Sligo, his case excited no small degree of consideration: nearly all the magistrates in the county assembled at New Ross, and it was attempted, in the very first stage of the proceeding, to exclude counsel. Mr. Bric, however, successfully contended for the right of the bar; the investigation went on, and charges of very serious misconduct were fully established against Captain Browne; in consequence of which that gentleman was removed from the command of the police in the county of Wexford. For the manner in which he conducted this affair Mr. Bric received the

public thanks of the Catholics of Wexford, and his conduct was afterwards mentioned in terms of unqualified praise in parliament.

About this time a petition was presented by Mr. Charles Brownlow, from certain individuals in Dublin, which accused the old Catholic Association of various gross and unconstitutional acts. The statement of Mr. Brownlow made a considerable impression upon the house and the country. Ministers were strongly urged to take measures, even then, to put down the Association. The friends of the Catholics took the alarm, and strongly advised the leading members of the Association to take immediate steps to vindicate the conduct and the principles of that body. This important duty was confided to the hands of Mr. Bric; he presented the Association with the draft of a petition to the House of Commons, which was unanimously adopted.

In the winter of the year 1825 a desperate party affray took place at Killishandra, in the county of Cavan. Several persons were desperately wounded, and the town itself a long time stood in danger of being destroyed. This affair led to several prosecutions; and Mr. Bric was again selected by the Catholic Association to conduct those trials. Perhaps in no part of Ireland does party feeling run so high as in the county of Cavan. The great majority of the most powerful men, and of the magistracy, are supposed to belong to the High Church party, and are inveterately opposed to the Roman Catholics. It was before a bench crowded with these men, and headed by Lord Farnham, that Mr. Bric had to appear: the acknowledged advocate of the Catholic Association, he was peculiarly ungracious in the eyes of gentlemen who looked upon that body as a dangerous and almost a rebellious convention. Mr. Bric, however, opened his case with moderation; and, like a lawyer, he prudently kept politics as much as possible out of view, and gradually made his way with the bench and the jury, and established, by evidence, that the Orangemen were the aggressors throughout the unfortunate transaction. Mr. Bric,

however, at the suggestion of the bench, consented to waive all further proceedings, on the solemn promise of the Orangemen to live in future on terms of peace and friendship with their Catholic neighbours. The conduct of Mr. Bric on this occasion was highly approved of by the country at large, and it was afterwards commented upon in both Houses of Parliament, in a manner highly honourable to the subject of our memoir.

The next occasion on which Mr. Bric distinguished himself was at a Bible meeting in Cork. Capt. Gordon, the Hon. Mr. Noel, and other Bible missionaries, held a meeting in that city, which was attended by Mr. O'Connell, Mr. Bric, and Mr. Sheil; the debate lasted for two days, and the Catholics claimed a decided victory. In the winter of 1825 the Catholics determined to send a mission of their own to England—Mr. O'Connell, Mr. Bric, Mr. Sheil, and, if we recollect well, the Rev. Mr. Keogh, a distinguished and eloquent Roman Catholic priest, were named on that mission. The day before they intended to sail for Liverpool Mr. O'Connell was arrested by the Irish Government for words alleged to have been spoken by him in the Catholic Association; this put an end to the mission; but Mr. Bric vigorously put forth some very terse paragraphs in the London and Dublin press, reflecting on the unconstitutional measures of the Irish Government. Shortly after this affair the celebrated deputation came to London—Mr. Bric was of the number, and carried over a petition agreed to at an aggregate meeting of the Catholics held in Dublin the day before he sailed. The question of the wings came before the deputation, and was adopted, at least by a great majority; Mr. Bric not only voted for those measures, but wrote several essays in the Dublin papers, which were dispatched from London, urging every argument in favour of those measures, coupled with emancipation. Emancipation was not obtained, and the wings fell to the ground. They were, however, revived in Ireland, and gave rise to a long and bitter disputation; they were finally abandoned by Mr. O'Connell and his party, and stand con-

demned by the Catholics without any qualification. Mr. Wm. Cobbett, who had been before the strenuous supporter and admirer of Mr. O'Connell, attacked him fiercely on the subject of the wings: he was not satisfied with condemning the measures, but in repeated papers he bitterly and virulently attacked the man. It is impossible that a writer of the power of Mr. Cobbett should not bring round many to his cause, particularly where he had a popular topic, and where he met with very little opposition. The Dublin press was either silent or reviling—many of those who were formerly the ardent friends or the admirers of O'Connell, turned against him—he had a number of virulent and powerful enemies, and, for the first time, his splendid and unrivalled popularity seemed to totter. A meeting of the Catholics was held about this time in the city of Cork, where an organized party, headed by Mr. Roynane, the friend of Cobbett, and a man of considerable talents, determined to impeach O'Connell. The attack commenced by a powerful speech from Mr. Roynane, in which he accused Mr. O'Connell of much more than political errors, arising from judgment, and sustained his positions by long quotations from Cobbett. Mr. Bric was called upon to reply to this speech, and it is allowed that the effort he made on that occasion far surpassed any thing he ever did before or since; his feelings were strongly excited for his friend, in whose cause he embarked with all the self-devotion of a generous mind.—The speech reached England, and excited extraordinary interest; the philosophical calmness of Mr. Cobbett deserted him, and he at once, in his *Register*, opened upon Mr. Bric the innocuous artillery of the filthiest and most unmanly abuse and calumny that ever proceeded from his pen. The malignity of the attack rendered it not only inefficient for the purposes of Cobbett, but had the effect of attaching to Mr. Bric very many warm friends, who admired him for his manliness, and, if we may use the phrase, his courage.

In the late election at Monaghan Mr. Bric went down special, as leading counsel for the Hon. Mr. Wes-

tenra. That struggle was attended with the most signal success. In other counties in Ireland, where the struggle with intolerance was made, there were the great auxiliaries produced by excitement of the popular mind, raised by long and industrious preparations—there was money, or the influence of a Catholic gentry; in Monaghan, however, the fight was won by an impulse given at the moment to the energies of the people; there was scarcely the preparation of a day—there was no previous excitation of the popular passions—there was no treasury to draw upon for tens of thousands—there was only the materials for success existing in the circumstance of Colonel Leslie being an old and incorrigible bigot, and opponent of the Catholic claims; and the expectation, for there was no more than expectation, that Mr. Westenra would imitate the principles of his noble father, and range himself with the friends of the people. With such materials to work upon did Mr. Bric go to Monaghan. The clergy acted nobly; every man did his duty. The popular honesty was booked—the freeholders rushed to the hustings, and we may say immolated their best worldly interests, at least under the circumstances of the times, at the altar of their country. Mr. Bric was incessant in his labours, which were crowned with success. The Catholic clergy of Monaghan and Mr. Bric were certainly the agents in effecting the election of Mr. Westenra. For his conduct at Monaghan the Catholic Association included Mr. Bric in a vote of thanks passed to Messrs. O'Connell and Sheil for the services they had rendered in Waterford and Louth. But a few weeks since Mr. Bric went special to Mountmelick, in a case singularly interesting, in consequence of the animosity which existed between the inhabitants of that town. Mr. Bric, who certainly must get the credit of being a most excellent pacificator, reconciled the hostile parties, and retired from the Court-house with the applause of the bench and the belligerents.

Having entered into this minute relation of the leading incidents of the political life of Mr. Bric, we are precluded from indulging in any minute

analysis of his qualities as a speaker or politician. He is a strange compound of excellence and defects. His conduct, however, on all occasions, is influenced by honest conviction;

and if at any time he has erred in his politics, the error has been more attributable to the fallacy inseparable from human judgment, than to any deliberate intention of doing wrong.

THE PUBLISHING TRADE—GEORGE CRUIKSHANK'S PHRENOLOGICAL ILLUSTRATIONS—CHRISTMAS PRESENTS—THE AMULET, &c.

Rory O'Rourke, Esq. to the Editor.

HAVING, my dear Editor, poured the vial of my wrath on the Archbishop of Dublin, I feel quite comfortable; the expansive surface of my ample forehead is without a single wrinkle; there is no pursing of the eyebrows, no curling of the lip. All within me is as tranquil as a holiday; and, while I sit here with your letter before me, I feel disposed to forgive the world—to think Orangemen less wicked than they are, parsons less avaricious, and the Greek commissioners quite innocent. While in this happy mood, let me turn to those softeners of life—the arts and literature; for, though a profound and thinking politician, I am not naturally phlegmatic, or discontented. I love books and paintings; have shook hands with the Venns de Medicis, and sauntered through the Louvre; spend whole days in the library of the British Museum, and even sit down at the Chapter.

And so the publishing trade is reviving! Murray has announced some score of works. Colburn is bestirring himself; and the 'Row,' I understand, has put all the available authors and printers into requisition. I like to see the intellectual machine in operation—a printing-press by all means before the steam-engine; for, necessary as the spinning jennies may be, yet, to my mind, the production of good books is more indicative of national health than the production of good cottons; it bespeaks people at ease, in want of nothing but mental luxuries.

Whatever may be the sign or the cause, most certainly the publishing trade has revived, or rather is reviving. Now, M'Culloch would attribute this to the natural operation of trade, and the abundance of wealth. Nonsense! wealth was just as abundant six months ago; there was quite as much money in the country, but

men did not choose to part with it: they wrapt themselves up in ignorance; they would not read to be enlightened; they were out of humour with themselves and the world; and they would have persisted in their misanthropy, have continued in the murky mood, and November would be an awful month for coroners and jurors, were it not for my friend George Cruikshank's philosophical pencil. Ay, start not! George is really a profound thinker; but he does not think like ordinary men; he does not get into a tub to lucubrate; he does not deal in sermons or precepts. No, faith, he is a perfect Democritus; he laughs at the world, and the little men who inhabit it; and what's more, he makes the world, and those who are in it, laugh too. How can they help it? Where are the stiff, tight-drawn muscles which would not relax at his illustration of philoprogenitiveness? Where is the dusky face of gravity that would not, like the boa-constrictor, cast its skin at the sight of his 'Drawing?' (I like the drawing of the cork best, there is always music in it;) and where is the Quaker who would not laugh outright at 'Language?'

But what need of individual examples? Has not trade revived? has not money become plentiful? Yet on the beginning of August last, Cobbett had up the 'Gridiron,' and kept the remedy for our ills in his pocket; while 'The Times' newspaper assured us, with the utmost gravity, that there were no hopes; and the 'Gazette' swelled with the list of bankrupts: in a word, the world was out of joint, when George Cruikshank set it right by publishing his 'Phrenological Illustrations.' Mankind, as if by consent, burst into a general laugh—and, lo! they were at once cured of their commercial quinsey. For the first time during eight months

people put their hands in their pockets cheerfully : it was an involuntary act ; they could not help fishing for eight shillings ; but, on finding more money there than they gave themselves credit for, their good humour was further promoted ; and if once John Bull gets into good humour, every thing is sure to go right.

I was myself a witness to the most astonishing effect produced by the 'Phrenological Illustrations.' On the day of publication I was standing in the shop in Ivy Lane, when that oracle of God, and expounder of prophecy, the Rev. E. Irving, entered. He called for the last number of the 'Dublin and London ;' but on casting an oblique look at one of Cruikshank's coloured plates—the third—it was curious to see the change which his countenance underwent. Naturally, you know, it is disastrous in the extreme—almost cadaverous—it speaks of bottomless pits and flaming brimstone ; but the sight of the plate was electrical. You could see the darkness of his visage mount upwards, pursued by a bright shade of pleasure—it was Michael defeating Satan—the light of morning overcoming the darkness of night. Though on his way to release his watch—pledged at a Bible meeting—from Lord Gambier, he encroached on the sacred silver, and purchased a copy of the 'Illustrations.'

There is no general rule without an exception ; and even George Cruikshank has failed to give universal satisfaction. The disciples of Gall and Spurzheim are up in arms, and the last 'Phrenological Journal' is mighty wrath, indeed. The laugh is against them, and they cannot parry it. George, they say, knows nothing of the science. There they are out. His is a new version ; they place 'veneration' in the top of the head, and George, more scientific, fixes it above the abdomen. Is he not right ? Did you ever see a pious parson without a large bump in that region of the physical man ? It is a mark of orthodoxy. 'I like not your spare men,' said Cæsar, or rather Shakspeare ; and was not the bard of Avon a right good phrenologist ?—he knew the make of a Godly man—'a fair round belly.'

'Combativeness,' exhibited at Donnybrook, is an exquisite thing. They fight like men in earnest ; but your Englishman is sadly mistaken when he considers Donnybrook a place of fighting. It is the most peaceable fair in Ireland ; there are none of your Moony's, and O'Carroll's, with well-seasoned shilelahs, like the umbrellas of 'retired tradesmen' on a fine day, stuck under their arms, anxiously waiting for the commencement of club-hostilities, careless about the party to which they may attach themselves—and indifferent about the result, so that they may have 'a bit of a clane fight, any how.' You do not see the Ballymittee boys congregated on the right, and the Killcoran boys on the left, eyeing each other with glances, half funny, half ferocious, each waiting for the 'provocation,' and each afraid to give it. You do not see the 'Nowlan faction,' like London pickpockets, kicking up a 'row' among themselves, showing mock-fight, just to create an apology for half-killing 'the Howloghan faction,' who are greatly their inferiors as to numbers. You see nothing of this in Donnybrook ; nor have I ever heard there, as I have in 'sweet Munster,' any one cry out, rather late in the evening, 'The glory of Ireland is gone for ever, since we hadn't one bit of a *spuddoch* to-day.' Still there is Irish blood occasionally exhibited at Donnybrook : the mountain boys sometimes pay it a visit ; and then, if you were ever present, you might indeed be able to appreciate George Cruikshank's design, but not otherwise. He must have witnessed the scene he has depicted so accurately ; genius might have conceived something like it, but never could have been so faithfully minute, unless the 'combat' had once been palpable to the senses.

As a work of art, I leave others to pass judgment on 'Phrenological Illustrations.' That which pleases all men—the young and the aged—the illiterate man and the connoisseur—must possess more than ordinary excellence. There are thirty-two illustrations. Which is the best ?

Although the risible designs of Cruikshank form the most appro-

priate of 'presents' at this season—when all should be festivity and gladness—when laughter should be perpetually on the countenance, and wine and something else perpetually on the table—there are other little offerings, brilliant and beautiful tokens for one's mistress, and 'forget me nots' for one's friend, issued annually at this season. I hail them as evidence of an age of intellect—not so much for what they contain, but inasmuch as they speak of taste and literature among a public who are enlightened enough to prefer those gems of genius to foolish baubles and childish trinkets. There are four of them published this year, containing from eleven to thirteen illustrations each—the engravings being a specimen of what the burin can do; while they all say, 'thus far art has gone in England, and no farther.' They individually bear evidence of 'patient touches;' but perhaps the man of taste would prefer more vigorous marks of genius, and less appearance of manual labour. To the uninitiated, however, they must appear exquisitely beautiful. They threw my girls into ecstasies; and even Mrs. O'Rourke herself devoured them—I mean with her eyes. The literary portion of these little annuals are the miscella-

neous contributors, prose and poetry, of the literati of the day, arranged according to the taste of the editors. 'A gift horse,' &c. and as the publishers paid nothing for authorship, perhaps criticism would be out of place. Let us then make the most of what we have—mediocre as it is—and, as some one in the play says, be thankful.

THE AMULET, though of a religious cast, is a charming little thing. Its embellishments are of the first order; perhaps the most superior of the kind—certainly before some of those which ornament its cotemporaries. The 'Pilgrims' is a most finished thing, both in design and execution; and the other engravings are equally excellent. The literary department has been supplied by well known pens: take a sample or two.

You know James Montgomery, late editor of the 'Sheffield Iris'? Jemmy is a religious man, but there is no *cant* about him: his mind is independent, and so is his muse. He follows no model servilely, but does whatever he undertakes after a manner of his own, and seldom fails to please. The following is from his pen:—

THE DROUGHT—BY JAMES MONTGOMERY.

'What strange, what fearful thing hath come to pass?
The ground is iron, and the skies are brass:
Man, on the withering harvest, casts his eye,
"Give me your fruits in season, or I die;"
The timely fruits implore their parent—Earth,
"Where is thy strength to bring us forth to birth?"
The Earth, all prostrate, to the Clouds complains—
"Send to my heart your fertilizing rains;"
The Clouds invoke the Heavens—"Collect, dispense
Through us your healing, quickening influence;"
The Heaven to Him that rules them raise their moan—
"Command thy blessing, and it shall be done."
—The Lord is in his temple:—hushed and still,
The suppliant Universe awaits his will.

'He speaks:—and to the clouds the Heavens dispense
With lightening speed, their genial influence:
The gathering, breaking clouds pour down the rains:
Earth drinks the bliss thro' all her eager veins.
From teeming furrows start the fruits to birth,
And shake their riches on the lap of Earth:
Man sees the harvests grow beneath his eye,
Turns, and looks up with rapture to the sky;
All that have breath and being then rejoice,
All Nature's voices blend in one great voice;

"Glory to God, who thus *Himself* makes known!"

—When shall all tongues confess HIM GOD ALONE?

Lord, as the rain comes down from heaven—the rain

That waters Earth, and turns not thence again,

But makes the tree to bud, the corn to spring,

And feeds and gladdens every living thing ;

So come thy Gospel o'er a world destroyed,

In boundless blessings, and return not void :

So let it come, in universal showers,

To fill Earth's dreariest wilderness with flowers,

—With flowers of promise, fill the wild within

Man's heart, laid waste and desolate by sin :

Where thorns and thistles curse the infested ground,

Let the rich fruits of righteousness abound ;

And trees of life, for ever fresh and green,

Flourish, where only trees of death have been :

Let Truth look down from heaven, Hope soar above,

Justice and Mercy kiss, Faith work by Love ;

Heralds the year of jubilee proclaim ;

Bow every knee at the Redeemer's name ;

Nations new-born, their fathers' idols spurn ;

The ransomed of the Lord with songs return ;

Through realms, with darkness, thralldom, guilt, o'erspread,

In light, joy, freedom, be the spirit shed.

Speak thou the word:—to Satan's power say, "*Cease!*"

But to a world of pardoned sinners—"Peace!"

'Thus, in thy grace, O God, *Thyself* make known,

Then shall all tongues confess THEE GOD ALONE !

What next? A hymn, by Bowring? You may stare, but John has *cause* to become religious; but as it is yet doubtful whether he is a '*Greek*' or a Christian, I shall pass him by until

the fact is ascertained. Stand forward No Pope—ry Bowles. Ay, and sweet lines you can write, too. Here they are: I am sure even thy antagonist, Roscoe, would like them.

RESTORATION OF MALMESBURY ABBEY—BY THE REV. W. L. BOWLES.

[This majestic but dilapidated pile, has been repaired at great expense, and with taste and judgment in every respect consonant to and worthy of its ancient character. These verses were written under the contemplation of this singularly beautiful and unique pile being again opened for public worship, by a sacred musical performance.]

'Monastic and time-consecrated Fane,

Thou hast put on thy shapely state again,

Almost august, as in thy early day,

Ere ruthless Henry rent thy pomp away.

'No more the mass on holidays is sung,

The Host high-rais'd, or fuming censer swung ;

No more, in amice white, the fathers, slow,

With lighted tapers, in long order go ;—

Yet the tall window lifts its arched height,

As to admit heaven's pale but purer light :

Those massy-cluster'd columns, whose long rows,

E'en at noon-day, in shadowy pomp repose,

Amid the silent sanctity of death,

Like giants seem to guard the dust beneath :

Those roofs re-echo (tho' no altars blaze)

The prayer of penitence, the hymn of praise ;

Whilst meek Religion's self, as with a smile,

Reprints the tracery of the hoary pile.

'Worthy its guest, the temple. What remains?

Oh, Mightiest Master, thy immortal strains

These roofs demand. Listen,—with prelude slow,
 Solemnly sweet, yet full, the organs blow.
 And hark! again, heard ye the choral chaunt
 Peal through the echoing arches, jubilant?
 More softly now, imploring litanies,
 Wafted to heaven, and mingling with the sighs
 Of penitence, from yon high altar rise:
 Again the vaulted roof "Hosannah" rings—
 "Hosannah! Lord of Lords, and King of Kings!"
 'Rent, but not prostrate, stricken, yet sublime,
 Reckless alike of injuries or time;
 Thou unsubdued, in silent majesty,
 The tempest has defied, and shalt defy!
 'The temple of our Sion so shall mock
 The muttering storm, the very earthquake's shock,
 Founded, O Christ! on thy eternal rock.'

Miss Edgeworth has contributed a paper, or rather a friend has transmitted a paper of hers, on 'French Oaths.' I have my doubts of her being the author; but none whatever respecting the authorship of the following. Any one might swear to the 'Sing, sang, song—Song, sing, sang,' of Miss Landon, *alias* L. E. L.

WISHES—BY L. E. L.

'It was a summer night,
 And I looked upon the sky,
 When suddenly a light
 Flashed in its splendour by.
 I watched the red flash pass
 On its shining path of flame,
 And a wish rose in my heart,
 That mine might be the same.
 It left its native sky,
 And when it touched the earth,
 There rose a pillar of fire,
 As 'twere a spirit's birth;
 And stronger grew my wish,
 Till as I passed next day,
 Where fell that radiant light,
 But blackened ashes lay,
 The forest oak was sear,
 The grass had lost its green;
 Reproof!—how could I wish
 Such course for me had been.

'It was one summer night
 I sailed on the wide sea far,
 And our pilot and our hope
 Was the gleam of one pale star.
 It had risen unmarked, what time
 The red sun touched the brine;
 But a thousand rich clouds shone,
 And it won no gaze of mine.
 Now eve after eve I watched
 That sweet star's guiding light;
 And my heart learnt a meeker lesson
 From the quiet presence of night;
 And such I said be my fate—
 A calm and a lowly one,
 But passed in blessing and peace,
 As that fair star has done.

Oh! what is the brightest hour
That ever to earth was given,
To the beauty of that mild light,
Which is direct from heaven.'

Another specimen or two, and I and the other—not less beautiful—
have done. One of them is from the from the inspired lime-burner of
pen of the late Mrs. Henry Tighe, Northamptonshire.
the lamented author of 'Psyche';

THE OLD MAID'S PRAYER TO DIANA—BY THE LATE MRS. HENRY TIGHE.

'Since thou and the stars, my dear goddess, decree,
That Old Maid as I am, an Old Maid I must be,
O hear the petition I offer to thee—

For to bear it must be my endeavour:
From the grief of my friendships all dropping around,
Till not one whom I loved in my youth can be found—
From the legacy-hunters that near us abound,
Diana, thy servant deliver.

'From the scorn of the young and the flaunts of the gay,
From all the trite ridicule rattled away
By the pert ones who know nothing wiser to say,
Or a spirit to laugh at them, give her:
From repining at fancied neglected desert,
Or, vain of a civil speech, bridling alert,
From finical niceness or slatternly dirt;
Diana, thy servant deliver.

'From over solicitous guarding of pelf,
From humour unchecked—that most obstinate elf—
From every unsocial attention to self,
Or ridiculous whim whatsoever:
From the vapourish freaks or methodical airs,
Apt to sprout in a brain that's exempted from cares,
From impertinent meddling in others' affairs,
Diana, thy servant deliver.

'From the erring attachments of desolate souls,
From the love of spadille, and of matadore voles,
Or of lap-dogs, and parrots, and monkies, and owls,
Be they ne'er so uncommon and clever:
But chief from the love (with all loveliness flown)
Which makes the dim eye condescend to look down
On some ape of a fop, or some owl of a clown,—
Diana, thy servant deliver.

'From spleen at beholding the young more caressed,
From pettish asperity tartly expressed,
From scandal, detraction, and every such pest—
From all, thy true servant deliver:
Nor let satisfaction depart from her cot—
Let her sing, if at ease, and be patient, if not;
Be pleased when regarded, content when forgot,
Till the Fates her slight thread shall dis sever.'

SONNET TO A YOUNG LADY—BY THE NORTHAMPTONSHIRE PEASANT.

'Maiden! the blooms of happiness surround thee;
The world's bright side, like thy young visions fair,
Gay and unclouded, smile in raptures round thee,
With joys unconscious of encroaching care;
The poesy of life hath sweetly found thee—
Ah! would thy sunshine had no clouds to share,

And the young flowers with which her joys have crowned thee,
Would they were dreams as lasting as they're fair.

But Nature, Maiden, hath its winter;—Care,
Or more or less, in ambush waits to wound thee.

Then cheat thy gentle heart with no frail token

From witching Hope—far better joys pursue :

I know her closest bonds are easy broken,

And feel the picture I have drawn too true.'

The prose is pretty; but, as that is an every-day commodity—and as your own pages contain specimens, some from my pen, which may serve as models of excellence—I shall make no extracts, save and except the following by Crofton Croker—John Wilson Croker's first cousin, and my particular friend. It is illustrated by one of the prettiest little landscapes I ever beheld. The tradition is universal—East, West, North, and South; but I do not recollect that ever it was so prettily told before.

THE SONG OF THE LITTLE BIRD.

BY T. F. CROFTON CROKER.

'The chief amusement of an excursion which I recently made through the South of Ireland, was collecting from the mouths of the peasantry various legendary tales; and I found, on more than one occasion, that the most favourable opportunity afforded me of doing so, was at a kind of religious meeting termed a *pattern*.

'This meeting was generally held in the vicinity of a well which had been dedicated to a *patron* saint, from whence probably originated the name. The belief that the waters of these holy wells possess virtues, which at certain seasons have miraculous operation, collects around them the most superstitious of the Irish peasantry, in the fond hope of receiving relief for their infirmities. The fifth chapter of St. John may be referred to in proof of the antiquity of the custom; and, no doubt, in the early ages of Christianity, at these natural fountains, converts received the first rites of the church, which excited a feeling of pious regard towards the spot.

'The salutary exercise of a pilgrimage to such places of reputed sanctity—often, the medicinal property of the well itself, and, above all, the faith placed in the visit—effect cures which tend to keep alive the traditional veneration for holy wells. If one in every hundred devotees re-

ceives any benefit, the miracle is soon noised abroad, with the usual exaggeration of oral transmission.

'The annexed sketch exhibits the general character of the commencement of a pattern. As such assemblies are composed of those who believe in the performance of miracles, through all ages of the world, legends of all descriptions, but more particularly those of different saints, are told more freely than under other circumstances, or in other situations. From several so related to me, I select the following, chiefly on account of the extreme simplicity of its diction. Indeed, such was the charm of this simplicity of style over me, that, at the time of hearing, I felt little inclined to question the truth of so marvellous a tale. The scenery around me may have had, and probably had, its influence. It was a beautiful summer's evening, and, weary with walking, I had sat down to rest upon a grassy bank, close to a holy well. I felt refreshed at the sight of the clear cold water, through which pebbles glistened, and sparks of silvery air shot upwards: in short, I was in the temper to be pleased. An old woman had concluded her prayers, and was about to depart, when I entered into conversation with her, and I have written the very words in which she related to me the legend of the Song of the Little Bird.

'The tale, however, is not peculiar to Ireland; a more florid version of it will be found in the "*Prato Fiorito di varj Esemj*," a collection of Catholic legends, where it is given as related by Henricus, in his "*Speculum Exemplorum*."

'Many years ago, there was a very religious and holy man, one of the monks of a convent, and he was one day kneeling at his prayers in the garden of his monastery, when he heard a little bird singing in one of the rose-trees of the garden, and there never was any thing that he had

heard in the world so sweet as the song of that little bird.

"And the holy man rose up from his knees, where he was kneeling at his prayers, to listen to its song; for he thought he never in all his life heard any thing so heavenly.

"And the little bird, after singing for some time longer in the rose-tree, flew away to a grove at some distance from the monastery, and the holy man followed it, to listen to its singing; for he felt as if he could never be tired of listening to the sweet song that it was singing out of its little throat.

"And the little bird after that went away to another distant tree, and sung there for awhile, and then again to another tree, and so on in the same manner, but ever farther and farther away from the monastery, and the holy man still following it farther and farther and farther, still listening delighted to its enchanting song.

"But at last he was obliged to give up, as it was growing late in the day, and he returned to the convent; and as he approached it in the evening, the sun was setting in the west with all the most heavenly colours that were ever seen in all this world, and when he came into the convent it was night-fall.

"And he was quite surprised at every thing he saw; for they were all strange faces about him in the monastery, that he had never seen before; and the very place itself, and every thing about it, seemed to be strangely altered; and altogether it seemed entirely different from what it was when he left in the morning; and the garden was not like the garden where he had been kneeling at his devotions when he first heard the singing of the little bird.

"And while he was wondering at all that he saw, one of the monks of the convent came up to him, and the holy man questioned him—'Brother, what is the cause of all these strange changes that have taken place here since the morning?'

"And the monk that he spoke to seemed to wonder greatly at his question, and asked him what he meant by the changes since morning; for sure there was no change; that all

was just as before: and then he said, 'Brother, why do you ask these strange questions, and what is your name? for you wear the habit of our order, though we have never seen you before.'

"So, upon this, the holy man told his name, and that he had been at mass in the chapel in the morning, before he had wandered away from the garden, listening to the song of a little bird, that was singing among the rose-trees, near where he was kneeling at his prayers.

"And the brother, while he was speaking, gazed at him very earnestly, and then told him, that there was in the convent a tradition of a brother of his name, who had left it two hundred years before; but that what had become of him was never known.

"And while he was speaking, the holy man said, 'My hour of death is come: blessed be the name of the Lord, for all his mercies to me, through the merits of his only begotten Son.'

"And he kneeled down that very moment, and said, 'Brother, take my confession, and give me absolution, for my soul is departing.'

"And he made his confession, and received his absolution, and was anointed, and before midnight he died.

"The little bird, you see, was an angel, one of the cherubim or seraphim; and that was the way that the Almighty was pleased in his mercy to take to himself the soul of that holy man."

You may wonder why I extract so much from one of these delightful little books. 'Faith, an I'll tell you the rason,' for I love candour. You must know, then, that the little O'Rourke's, in their vivacious eagerness to look at the 'pictures'—a proof of their excellence—spoiled the 'golden lining' of the first 'Amulet,' and committed sundry depredations on its pages; so much so, that the purchase of another copy became necessary. This ill-used 'Amulet,' though no longer fit to lie on the drawing-room table, was just *fit* to be sent to Robins's office. As I detest the trouble of copying, and as the thumbs of the compositors are none of the cleanest, I thought they might as well thumb away upon the soiled 'Amu-

let,' instead of my clean 'Souvenir,' and 'Forget me not.' You must approve of the expedient. The writers are the same in the four annuals; and as you wanted only a few specimens,

I thought I might as well supply them from the readiest, though the most dingy source.—Mrs. O'Rourke calls me to take a walk. Adieu!

RORY O'ROURKE.

POSTSCRIPT.

WHAT WE HAVE DONE, AND WHAT WE MEAN TO DO.

Two years ago we found Ireland a blank in the literary world, while the surrounding nations were plethoric with intellectual fame: she was without a single periodical; and so successful was misrepresentation respecting her degeneracy, that even Irishmen themselves had become persuaded that their poor abused country was incapable of supporting a solitary publication devoted to her cause. Under these appalling circumstances it argued—we say so with becoming modesty—no small degree of courage in us to launch our bark on an ocean already strewn with literary wrecks. The sages on shore prognosticated ruin; but, conscious of our own strength, and assured of sympathy, we spread our canvass to the intellectual breeze, and rode, if not triumphant, at least successfully enough to encourage us to new attempts in the cause we have espoused.

On our part—for we like to do ourselves justice—there was no quackery—no puffing. We spread our intellectual wares unostentatiously before a discerning public; and though we have not been favoured with a single cheer—a single word of approval from those who are considered (we think justly) the benefactors of their country—we have met with that public support which reflects honour on Ireland, while it shows that the Irish people are not wanting in intellectual discernment. We do not invidiously complain of any man, or set of men; but if a gentleman who made but *one* speech relative to Irish literature is entitled to the public thanks of his countrymen, surely we should have met with something else than silent neglect. We have—and we say it proudly—been the first to work successfully the mines of Irish literature. We have opened veins hitherto unexplored, and we refer to our past labours in proof of our assiduity and zeal. No magazine of the same limits has ever been published which combined so large a portion of undoubted intellect.

Mr. Sheil has been kind enough to approve of every thing about us but our size—he is right. In our essays we were crippled for want of room; but ours was a hazardous attempt—we were to advance upon untried ground; and having found this firm—having found that patronage which we anticipated, we lose no time in enlarging our limits—in placing our work on a footing inferior to no periodical of the day. On the 1st of January we come forth in a new dress, with increased resources, and consequently with increased expense. To the public we commit ourselves; Ireland wants our advocacy in the metropolis of the empire; she will therefore feel it her interest to support us.

In conclusion, the Editor takes leave to state that his services here terminate; but he cannot retire without expressing his gratification that he is to be succeeded by one, whom the public has long since acknowledged to rank among the first writers of this or any other country.

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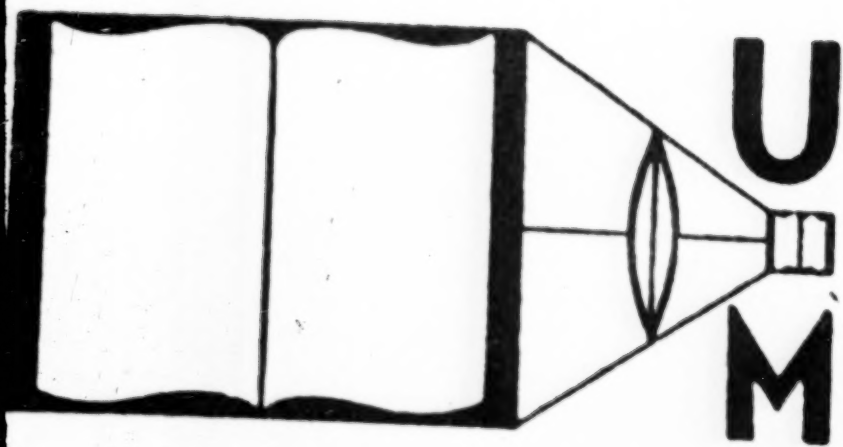
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